Souvenir narratif :
Rencontres rapprochées entre musulmans et juifs dans l'Atlas marocain

par

Sarah Frances Levin

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Division des études supérieures de

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Résumé

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Sarah Frances Levin

Docteur en philosophie en études juives, conjointement avec la

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dans le cadre de l'accent mis sur le folkloreUniversité de

Californie, BerkeleyProfesseur

Chana Kronfeld, coprésidenteProfesseur

Charles Briggs, coprésident

Cette thèse examine les relations judéo-musulmanes du XXe siècle dans l'Atlas marocain à travers les traditions orales (anecdotes, blagues, chansons, duels de poésie) telles que les musulmans et les juifs s'en souviennent au XXIe siècle. Les Juifs vivaient dans ces régions à prédominance berbère depuis plus de mille ans ; pourtant, ces communautés juives rurales avaient presque complètement disparu au début des années 1960, en raison de l'émigration massive, principalement vers Israël. Malgré la totalité de la rupture, les Juifs et les musulmans conservent des souvenirs vifs de leurs anciens voisins. En m'appuyant sur mon travail de terrain avec des musulmans vivant toujours dans des villages marocains et avec des juifs en Israël qui avaient émigré de ces mêmes villages plus d'un demi-siècle auparavant, j'utilise les anecdotes et les chansons qui animent ces souvenirs comme mes sources principales. Mon analyse s'appuie en outre sur des recherches approfondies sur l'histoire et la culture marocaines. Mon étude révèle que les traditions orales berbères ont fonctionné dans le passé - et continuent de fonctionner dans les réminiscences actuelles - comme des formes de reconnaissance créative de la différence et de l'affinité entre les Juifs et les musulmans. L'analyse d'exemples tirés de ce corpus met en lumière des aspects et des nuances des subtilités de la vie quotidienne rarement abordés dans d'autres sources, ce qui permet de mieux comprendre les paradoxes et les possibilités de la coexistence entre Juifs et Musulmans dans les montagnes de l'Atlas marocain, et peut-être au-delà.

La production culturelle et les frontières interreligieuses sont donc au cœur de mes préoccupations théoriques. Les traditions culturelles berbères, en particulier, offrent un cadre unique (pour les participants et les chercheurs) pour aborder les questions de frontières et de différences, tout en élucidant les mondes culturels partagés des juifs et des musulmans dans lesquels les traditions orales ont joué un rôle crucial, et d'où sont issus la créativité, l'humour et la communauté. C'est l'engagement avec la différence, plutôt que son effacement, qui a favorisé la

Je commence par une enquête sur le phénomène des juifs arabophones parmi les musulmans berbophones, qui met également en lumière la participation des juifs aux traditions orales berbères - et à d'autres traditions culturelles. Plutôt qu'une acculturation unidirectionnelle de la minorité dans la culture majoritaire, les formes culturelles berbères engagées par les musulmans et les juifs reflètent un échange dynamique. J'avance l'idée de "coproductions" entre musulmans et juifs pour de nombreuses traditions orales berbères communes, en particulier pour les duels poétiques. Dans mon analyse des anecdotes et des poèmes racontés, j'explore la manière dont les musulmans et les juifs ne se parlent pas seulement *entre eux* mais aussi *par la* voix de l'autre. En adaptant les concepts théoriques de dialogue et de polyphonie de Bakhtin, je montre comment le fait de parler à la voix de l'autre permet aux narrateurs musulmans et juifs d'exprimer simultanément des significations multiples et souvent contradictoires. Tout au long de mon analyse, j'étudie comment les frontières n'ont pas toujours correspondu de manière nette ou prévisible aux catégories religieuses, et comment la stratification sociopolitique complexe ne s'est pas inscrite dans un binaire majorité-minorité simplifié.

Les vues nuancées des relations judéo-musulmanes que mon projet présente servent de modèle pour explorer ces relations intercommunautaires au-delà de l'axe temporel et géographique de ma thèse. Mon étude sert de correctif aux vues simplifiées et polarisées des relations entre juifs

Cette thèse est dédiée à mon père.
Aaron Raisin Levin,

DONT LES SOINS ET L'AFFECTION CONSTANTS,
ONT ÉCLAIRÉ TOUS MES CHEMINS DANS LA VIE,
ET DONT LA LIBÉRALITÉ,
I ONT ÉTÉ AUTORISÉS À VISITER DES PAYS ÉTRANGERS...
AVEC L'AMOUR DU JOURNAL ET LA RÉVÉLATION DU
JOURNAL *(Un autre budget, ou, Choses que j'ai vues en Orient*,
Jane Anthony Eames, 1885)

et à la mémoire de ma mère, Marcia Josel Levin,
à qui je dois tout.

Table des matières

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Comme ceux qui me connaissent bien, tout ce que je fais prend un village ! Je n'aurais pas pu y parvenir sans un immense soutien sous de trop nombreux aspects à compter. Ainsi, à tous ceux que j'aimerais avoir le temps de remercier individuellement ici, vous savez qui vous êtes, et je vous suis éternellement reconnaissant de votre aide et de votre inspiration à tant de niveaux. Cette thèse n'aurait pas été achevée (et encore moins commencée) sans vous.

CHAPITRE UN

Introduction : La poétique de la différence

> ... Je n'ai jamais non plus réussi à aller au fond de ce que j'ai écrit... L'analyse culturelle est intrinsèquement incomplète. C'est une science étrange dont les assertions les plus éloquentes sont les plus tremblantes, dans laquelle arriver à quelque chose avec la matière en question, c'est intensifier le soupçon, à la fois le vôtre et celui des autres, que vous n'avez pas tout à fait raison.
>
> \- Clifford Geertz, *L'interprétation des cultures*

DESCRIPTION DE LA THÈSE

Juifs et musulmans ont vécu ensemble dans les villages à prédominance berbère des montagnes de l'Atlas marocain pendant plus de mille ans, jusqu'à l'émigration massive des Juifs, principalement vers Israël, dans les années 1950 et 1960. Peu de choses sont écrites sur la façon dont ces deux populations religieuses vivaient ensemble et interagissaient au quotidien, et les sources orales disparaissent rapidement au fur et à mesure que passent les dernières générations qui ont eu une expérience directe de la vie intercommunautaire. En 2011-2012, et au cours des étés suivants, j'ai mené des recherches sur le terrain auprès de musulmans dans de nombreux villages de l'Atlas marocain, et auprès de Juifs en Israël qui avaient immigré de ces mêmes villages (ou de villages voisins). Mon intention était d'étudier comment leurs souvenirs du XXIe siècle de leur vie commune, notamment exprimés par les traditions orales, pourraient enrichir la compréhension des relations entre les musulmans et les juifs du XXe siècle dans les montagnes de l'Atlas, et peut-être avoir des implications qui vont au-delà de cette époque et de ce lieu. Malgré la totalité de la rupture, les anciens musulmans et juifs conservent des souvenirs vifs de leurs anciens voisins, conservés en partie dans des histoires, des chansons et des blagues. Les récits oraux qui animent leurs souvenirs éclairent un passé partagé mais plein d'ambivalence et de contradictions, articulant la différence tout en révélant l'intimité dans leurs relations mutuelles. Si la vie des villageois était clairement liée à l'identité religieuse, les récits oraux actuels révèlent également une identité culturelle localisée commune. En utilisant les souvenirs de première main comme mes sources principales, mon analyse s'appuie également sur des recherches approfondies dans des archives et des publications, sur des consultations avec des spécialistes et sur un travail de terrain que j'ai effectué précédemment dans le cadre d'un autre projet. [1]

Malgré les différences religieuses et une hiérarchie sociopolitique dans laquelle les Juifs étaient la seule minorité religieuse sous une majorité musulmane au pouvoir, les musulmans et les

[1] Avant de me lancer dans des études supérieures, j'ai mené des recherches en tant que chercheur indépendant au Maroc et en Israël sur les communautés juives des régions berbérophones du Maroc pour plusieurs expositions internationales présentant des photographies prises par Elias Harms de Juifs marocains des montagnes de l'Atlas et des oasis

ont conservé une identité religieuse distincte au fil des siècles, leurs coutumes - certaines partagées, d'autres différenciées - reflètent une synergie permanente des coutumes et traditions berbères, arabes, juives, musulmanes et andalouses. Étant donné l'intimité de leur vie quotidienne, l'identité religieuse des musulmans et des juifs a nécessité une négociation constante des différences et des frontières ; la tension et la dynamique créative de cette négociation se reflètent dans les traditions orales qu'ils ont partagées avec moi.

Aperçu de l'argumentation : Limites et différences, créativité et communauté

Mes recherches révèlent que les traditions orales berbères ont fonctionné dans le passé - et continuent de fonctionner dans les réminiscences actuelles - comme des formes de reconnaissance créative de la différence entre juifs et musulmans, tout en reflétant l'affinité entre les deux groupes. Je soutiens que les traditions orales ont favorisé la communauté et l'affinité culturelle entre les Juifs et les Musulmans dans les montagnes de l'Atlas par l'expression de la différence, plutôt que par sa négation. "En dévalorisant la différence", explique Ira Bashkow dans une observation générale qui étaye mes conclusions sur la façon dont les Juifs et les musulmans ont navigué dans la vie interreligieuse des villages des montagnes de l'Atlas, "nous sommes amenés à nouveau à mettre trop l'accent sur les relations d'identité ou de partage comme base de la culture, et à d'ignorer le rôle des différences significatives dans la constitution de la vie socialeUn pluralisme viable
exige la reconnaissance des différences significatives et la reconnaissance que la différence peut être la base de relations productives de compréhension, de réciprocité et de respect mutuels" (Bashkow 2004:454). Lawrence Rosen applique cet argument de la reconnaissance de la différence au Maroc de manière plus générale dans son récent livre, *Two Arabs, A Berber and a Jew : Entangled Lives in Morocco* (2015), comme le résume Bruce Maddy-Weitzman dans sa critique du livre : La reconnaissance, l'acceptation et la défense des différences sont profondément ancrées dans la culture marocaine et islamique.... [Rosen] affirme que les quatre dramatis personae du livre "partagent une culture dans laquelle la différence est vitale, dans laquelle la diversité de leurs inclinations et de leurs relations est considérée comme un facteur d'enrichissement de leurs possibilités sociales". Pour eux, la différence "constitue une base de lien plutôt qu'une ligne de faille de séparation"". (Maddy-Weitzman 2016).

Je pense que cet engagement en faveur de la différence pour les Juifs et les musulmans de l'Atlas a été rendu possible et renforcé par les traditions culturelles qu'ils partageaient. Mon projet ajoute aux arguments de Bashkow et de Rosen cette dimension importante de la créativité en examinant les récits, les duels de poésie et d'autres formes culturelles orales comme véhicules de cette reconnaissance de la différence. Je soutiens que les frontières interreligieuses ont été à la fois construites et remises en cause par ces formes partagées. Les récits oraux que je présente révèlent et sont les sites d'une négociation permanente des frontières entre ces deux populations religieuses. Les récits relatés par mes interlocuteurs reflètent la danse complexe - et parfois tendue - entre affinité et différenciation.

Malgré son riche potentiel, l'analyse ethnographique qui prend en compte les voix des musulmans et des juifs dans le dialogue est rare dans les études sur les relations entre musulmans et

[2]Il y a plusieurs exceptions importantes dans les études menées en dehors du Maroc, dont voici quelques exemples excellents et variés. Joelle Bahloul intègre des témoignages juifs et musulmans dans *L'architecture de la mémoire : A Jewish-Muslim Household in Colonial Algeria 1937-1962* (1996). L'*objet de mémoire de* Susan Slyomovics : *Arab and Jew Narrate the Palestinian Village* (1998) est un projet très différent, qui utilise également le

Elle est également unique parmi les études des relations et du folklore juifs-musulmans, car elle se concentre sur deux populations qui ont autrefois vécu ensemble et sont maintenant séparées par un demi-siècle et des milliers de kilomètres ; par conséquent, ma recherche crée une "conversation" entre ceux qui sont partis et ceux qui sont restés. Prises ensemble, les réminiscences et les récits individuels des Juifs et des musulmans de l'Atlas fournissent les moyens de passer d'une vision trop souvent généralisée des *relations* entre musulmans et juifs à des perspectives particulières des *relations* interpersonnelles, et d'explorer les paradoxes et les possibilités qui se manifestent dans la coexistence interreligieuse. En écrivant sur la société interreligieuse andalouse, la spécialiste des études islamiques et juives Sarah Stroumsa fournit une analogie utile sur les limites d'un examen axé sur une communauté religieuse isolée, en le comparant à "l'examen d'un objet avec un seul œil" et comme "susceptible de produire une image plate et bidimensionnelle" (Stroumsa 2012:53). Et comme le suggère le travail du folkloriste A.K. Ramanujan sur les traditions littéraires des différents groupes religieux en Inde :

> Lorsque l'un complète, contredit, reflète et réfracte l'autre, nous devons les prendre ensemble pour donner un sens à la civilisation et entrevoir l'ensemble complexe. Chacun doit être lu à la lumière des autres, car chacun est défini par la présence des autres dans la mémoire. (Ramanujan 1999:25-26)

De même, dans mon travail, je cherche de nouvelles façons de discuter des relations entre les musulmans et les juifs des montagnes de l'Atlas, plutôt que de considérer les deux groupes en opposition. Comme l'écrit l'historienne Judith Lieu à propos des juifs et des chrétiens dans l'Antiquité : "Il peut y avoir d'autres relations avec la différence et l'altérité que l'opposition, bien que ce soit cette dernière qui ait eu tendance à dominer les études sur l'identité et l'altérité" (Lieu 2004 : 269).

J'espère que les résultats de mon projet suggéreront un cadre pour l'examen des relations intercommunautaires au-delà du centre d'intérêt temporel et géographique de ma thèse, et qu'ils soutiendront, comme l'écrit Richard Bauman, le "postulat sur lequel se construit le meilleur du folklore et de l'anthropologie : qu'une compréhension profonde, détaillée et nuancée du local éclairera et inspirera une vision plus globale" (Bauman 1993:xii). En outre, des études localisées et thématiques comme celle-ci sont nécessaires pour remettre en question les vues simplifiées et polarisées des relations entre juifs et musulmans qui prévalent dans les sphères publiques et les médias (trop souvent vues à travers le filtre de la politique du conflit sioniste/israélo-arabe),[3] et pour encourager l'appréciation des nuances, de la complexité et de la diversité des interactions entre musulmans et juifs. [4] Par exemple, les politiques identitaires ont restreint la reconnaissance

les récits des Juifs et des Palestiniens dans la construction de la mémoire. Avec son histoire de passés opposés, plutôt que partagés, il fournit un modèle précieux de circonstances contrastées à celles de mon projet. *Les fardeaux de la fraternité d'*Ethan Katz *: Juifs et musulmans d'Afrique du Nord à la France,* 2015, intègre diverses sources, y compris orales et écrites.

Plusieurs historiens travaillant sur le Maroc ont largement utilisé les manuscrits des deux communautés, comme les études approfondies et convaincantes de Schroeter (plusieurs) et Gottreich (2006).

[3] Pour une critique succincte des hypothèses communes et des dichotomies à travers lesquelles les relations judéo-musulmanes sont souvent perçues, voir Katz 2015 (en particulier l'introduction).

[4] C'est heureusement ce que font de nombreuses études récentes, notamment pour le Maroc. Pour des discussions approfondies sur les tendances et les paradigmes dans l'étude des relations judéo-musulmanes contemporaines, voir, par exemple, Schroeter (2002:5-10, 2016) et Marglin (2013:12-17, et en particulier sur les études marocaines, 15-16).

qui s'étend sur trois continents et d'identités culturelles communes au-delà des frontières religieuses, comme le berbère ou le kurde. Dans le cadre de ce mouvement vers des études localisées et thématiques, ma thèse apporte sa contribution distincte en présentant et en analysant la poétique des chants et des récits et leurs pratiques discursives, un axe et une dimension généralement absents de l'érudition.

Quelques études ont abordé les relations entre juifs et musulmans à travers l'étude des traditions culturelles contemporaines. Il est intéressant de noter que la musique est le domaine le plus souvent étudié dans les relations interculturelles contemporaines entre Juifs et Musulmans, notamment par les ethnomusicologues, qui ont utilisé des termes tels que "interzone" (Swedenburg 2005) et "convergence" (Seroussi 2010) pour décrire le processus de création. Mais ces études portent généralement sur les musiciens professionnels[5], alors que le mélange des musulmans et des juifs des montagnes de l'Atlas, des hommes et des femmes dansant, chantant et jouant du tambour dans les souvenirs de mes interlocuteurs, ne concernait pas les musiciens professionnels ou les événements commerciaux.

La plupart des autres études qui envisagent les relations entre juifs et musulmans à travers les traditions culturelles se fondent sur des témoignages ou des documents issus de la perspective juive, plutôt que de considérer ensemble celles des musulmans et des juifs, comme je le fais dans mon projet. Par exemple, l'anthropologue Harvey Goldberg utilise des analyses de contes populaires et d'autres traditions culturelles racontées par des Juifs libyens résidant actuellement en Israël comme catalyseurs pour discuter des relations judéo-musulmanes en Libye (Goldberg 1980, 1990, entre autres). Le travail du linguiste Joseph Chetrit sur la poésie orale maroco-arabe des femmes juives marocaines (Chetrit 2012), et sur la musique (Chetrit 2011) étudie la symbiose par le biais d'une analyse textuelle approfondie, bien que Chetrit ne traite pas des contextes interpersonnels ou ethnographiques. L'anthropologue Aomar Boum, dont la recherche sur les relations entre musulmans et juifs est l'une des rares à se baser sur des témoignages oraux musulmans, commence à examiner le contexte ethnographique de quelques contes et blagues à la fin de sa thèse, "Les musulmans se souviennent des juifs du sud du Maroc" (Boum 2006 : Ch 7). Dans mon projet, je prends en compte l'insistance de Boum à situer les récits dans leur "cadre historique et leur contexte socioculturel" (Boum 2006:481), en m'appuyant sur ce qu'il a commencé.

Au Maroc, la tradition commune qui a beaucoup attiré l'attention des chercheurs est celle de la coutume religio-culturelle de vénération des saints (phénomène particulièrement fort dans les montagnes de l'Atlas)[6], tandis que les danses traditionnelles communes *(ahwash)* et les duels de poésie chantée que j'ai trouvés très répandus et qui sont au centre de mon projet n'ont guère fait

[5] La musique professionnelle est souvent un domaine de croisement bidirectionnel de catégories, telles que religieuses ou ethniques (et non spécifiques au Moyen-Orient et à l'Afrique du Nord), en particulier dans le domaine professionnel. C'est pourquoi elle est souvent utilisée comme un trope pour les *convivences.* Pourtant, il sert de voie d'expression pour les minorités qui ne sont pas forcément autorisées ou disponibles ailleurs. (Je remercie Susan Miller et

[6] Voir par exemple Issachar Ben-Ami (1998), l'anthropologue/psychologue Yoram Bilu (2000) et l'anthropologue Oren Kosansky (2003). Notez que, bien qu'ils se concentrent sur la culture et la religion juives, ils touchent inévitablement aussi aux échanges interculturels et aux relations entre musulmans et juifs. Voinot (1948) a tenté de présenter une liste exhaustive de tous les sanctuaires communs ou se chevauchant. Le Mimuna, la fête marocaine commune qui suit la Pâque juive, a également fait l'objet de plusieurs articles (voir, par exemple, Goldberg 1978).

[7] À ma connaissance, les seuls échanges enregistrés qui ont été publiés autres que le mien (Levin 2007), se trouvent dans Lakhsassi (2008) où, en plus de citer mon article, il mentionne deux autres extraits de chansons enregistrés par Joseph Chetrit à partir d'un informateur juif, ainsi qu'un extrait d'un informateur musulman provenant de son travail de terrain commun avec Daniel Schroeter et Joseph Chetrit, 1999-2001. Elmedlaoui (2008, non publié) cite les exemples de Levin et

de tels échanges poétiques improvisés et éphémères n'ont jamais été enregistrés, peu de données de ce type sont encore mémorisées par les personnes âgées et encore moins sont collectées" (Elmedlaoui 2008). Mon objectif était d'en enregistrer quelques-unes pour mon mémoire, et j'ai eu la chance de pouvoir enregistrer des bribes dont plusieurs circulent encore un demi-siècle après

LE FOLKLORE AUX FRONTIÈRES : DIFFÉRENCIATION ET AFFINITÉ

La nature interdisciplinaire du folklore, qui permet d'incorporer des méthodologies de l'histoire, de la critique littéraire, de l'anthropologie et des études religieuses comparatives, offre un cadre unique pour l'étude de la poétique des relations entre juifs et musulmans. L'attention particulière que je porte à la poétique et aux récits révèle les perspectives d'une coexistence complexe et dynamique qui n'est pas nécessairement évidente dans d'autres sources, qu'elles soient écrites ou orales. Sur la base de quelques histoires et duels poétiques que j'avais rencontrés lors de mes premiers voyages au Maroc, et sur la base d'une conception du folklore qui identifie "les relations entre des groupes différents les uns des autres en termes de nationalité, de religion, de sexe, d'âge, etc." comme étant "au cœur de la thématique de la plupart des genres littéraires populaires" (Hasan-Rokem 1998:109), j'ai commencé mes recherches en partant de l'hypothèse que le folklore s'avérerait être un site fructueux pour l'étude des relations entre musulmans et juifs. En effet, les traditions orales berbères que j'ai enregistrées fournissent un riche matériel pour aborder les questions centrales des frontières et des différences entre les juifs et les musulmans de l'Atlas, tout en exprimant souvent simultanément des affinités et de l'affection.

Le folklore aux frontières de la différence

> Les frontières sont des phénomènes sociaux créés par les humains pour les aider à organiser leur vie. Les humains érigent des frontières pour servir de médiateur entre le familier d'*ici* et l'inconnu de *là-bas.* (Gabriel Popescu 2011:7)

Comme dans tout le Maroc (ainsi qu'en Afrique du Nord et au Moyen-Orient), la reconnaissance et le respect des frontières religieuses entre musulmans et juifs étaient nécessaires dans les villages des montagnes de l'Atlas pour l'harmonie intercommunautaire et le maintien de l'identité religieuse. Les frontières servaient à distinguer les groupes les uns des autres afin de préserver leurs identités religieuses respectives dans l'environnement culturel commun plus large. [8] Comme les Juifs et les musulmans des montagnes de l'Atlas partageaient un niveau similaire de religiosité respective, il n'y avait pas de possibilité d'assimilation ou de "neutralité" religieuse dans ce sens. En d'autres termes, une personne était clairement soit musulmane soit juive, et être musulman ou juif signifiait respecter ses coutumes religieuses et son code de conduite. Ce fait a contribué à favoriser le respect des limites clairement définies de l'autre (telles que les restrictions alimentaires, les espaces sacrés et les jours saints), ainsi qu'à se définir soi-même. Dans la pratique, bien sûr, les frontières n'étaient pas toujours claires, statiques ou tangibles ; les pratiques culturelles

[8] Pour l'essentiel, la période des souvenirs de mes interlocuteurs a précédé le nationalisme et les identités nationalistes comme base de leur sens des "frontières". Même avec la création de l'État d'Israël en 1948 et une certaine activité sioniste dans l'Atlas (Schroeter 2011, Tsur 1998), cela ne semble pas se refléter dans le sens des musulmans et des juifs de leur propre identité dans le passé remémoré. Cependant, cela se reflète certainement dans leurs commentaires sur ce passé, comme cela est noté dans les cas où cela est pertinent pour la discussion de leurs souvenirs.

que l'un ou l'autre groupe aurait admis. Et au-delà des frontières religieuses, d'autres frontières - le sexe, l'âge, l'appartenance à un village, la langue - sont en jeu et ouvrent la possibilité d'identités à plusieurs niveaux pour les juifs et les musulmans.

En outre, les frontières séparent et créent simultanément des contacts, servant de barrières ou de passages, d'où leur nature paradoxale et ambivalente. Les souvenirs de mes interlocuteurs révèlent une préoccupation pour les frontières qui a des aspects à la fois d'anxiété et d'attraction envers elles, reflétant le fait que les frontières n'étaient pas fixes, mais qu'elles devaient être continuellement construites ou déconstruites. Comme l'écrit Galit Hasan-Rokem, "Les frontières constituent souvent le problème ainsi que le lieu des conflits, mais elles peuvent aussi servir d'arène de contact et d'échange. Les frontières sont franchies et violées, elles sont fixées et négociées" (2003:7). Pour les juifs et les musulmans des montagnes de l'Atlas, la reconnaissance et le respect des frontières religieuses sont d'une part, et d'autre part, les frontières peuvent être jouées, violées et redéfinies. "Les frontières remplissent également des fonctions expressives, contrastives et constructives dans la culture. Elles sont significatives même lorsqu'elles sont arbitraires, socialement conséquentes même lorsqu'elles sont franchies" (Bashkow 2004:444), voire transgressées.

Dans ce projet, je m'appuie sur diverses théories des frontières, en les modifiant pour les adapter aux particularités des relations entre juifs et musulmans dans les montagnes de l'Atlas marocain. Pour l'idée de poétique et de créativité à la frontière, je commence par mettre au point la théorie du folkloriste Américo Paredes, dont le travail a été fondamental dès les années 1950 pour développer des concepts de folklore aux frontières de la différence (littéral et figuré). Passant en revue les contributions de Paredes, l'anthropologue Charles Briggs écrit "que les travaux de Paredes ont anticipé les stratégies critiques et expérimentales de l'ethnographie en utilisant des voix multiples, l'ironie, l'humour, l'inversion et des formes d'hétérogénéité textuelle qui reflètent le conflit social" (2012:93, citant Limón 1992 et López Morín 2006). En rapport avec mon travail, Paredes a identifié un folklore né de conflits entre des groupes ou des individus de part et d'autre d'une frontière (ou d'une frontière, qu'elle soit politique, culturelle, religieuse, fondée sur le sexe, etc.) [9] Selon ce concept, les frontières deviennent le site de traditions folkloriques qui jouent à la fois sur la création et le franchissement de ces frontières. "Plutôt que de situer le folklore dans des zones de culture partagée, écrit Briggs, Paredes l'a situé le long de la frontière, qu'il a définie comme... une "zone sensibilisée, complexe et mouvante, où deux cultures ou deux systèmes politiques se rencontrent" ([1978] 1993c : 19-20)" (Briggs 2012:92-93). La folkloriste et anthropologue Olga Nájera-Ramírez ajoute que "Paredes en est venu à percevoir la frontière comme un site de convergence culturelle, de conflit et de créativité" (Nájera-Ramírez 2012 : 69).

Toutefois, si le concept de folklore aux frontières de Paredes était vrai pour "le choc des cultures" le long des régions frontalières entre le Texas et le Mexique de ses études, je le modifie pour les musulmans et les juifs des montagnes de l'Atlas et je le pousse un peu plus loin dans l'examen de la production de la différence. D'une part, je suis d'accord avec la remise en question par Paredes des théories antérieures qui identifiaient les fonctions du folklore uniquement comme "le maintien de la stabilité de la culture" et "l'intégration de la société et le maintien de la cohésion

9Bien que les termes "frontière" et "limite" puissent être utilisés indifféremment, j'utilise surtout le terme "limite", car la "limite" porte en elle le sens d'une division politique (ce qui correspond au travail de Paredes, bien qu'il l'utilise aussi au

> Une partie importante du répertoire, la partie la plus distinctive, est générée par les oppositions sociales marquées de la région frontalière, une réponse à l'identité différentielle - et non partagée. En outre, la force génératrice d'où émerge ce folklore est le conflit, la lutte et la résistance, et le folklore fonctionne comme un instrument de ce conflit, et non au service de la maintenance des systèmes. (Paredes 1993:xiv)

Bauman semble faire une proposition "soit/soit" dans la citation ci-dessus, ainsi que lorsqu'il écrit (également à propos du travail de Paredes) que "les membres de groupes ou de catégories sociales particuliers peuvent échanger leur folklore entre eux, sur la base d'une identité commune, ou avec d'autres, sur la base d'une identité différentielle" (Bauman 1971:38). Cela suppose des identités distinctes et stables dans la création de frontières. Dans le cas des musulmans et des juifs, je m'oppose à l'hypothèse trop commune d'une séparation, d'une opposition, voire d'une inimitié permanente entre eux. Je suggère qu'une telle hypothèse s'avère inappropriée après une étude plus approfondie de la situation au Moyen-Orient et en Afrique du Nord. [10] Je soutiens que les frontières entre les groupes qui ont une "identité commune" ou entre des groupes "différents" ne sont pas toujours aussi nettes, en particulier pour les Juifs et les musulmans des montagnes de l'Atlas qui appartiennent aux deux catégories à la fois et dont les vies étaient entrelacées et interdépendantes depuis des siècles. J'ai constaté que l'engagement même avec la tension et la différence révélées par les traditions orales a simultanément élucidé les formes culturelles communes des deux groupes religieux et a contribué à créer une communauté. Le folklore peut paradoxalement refléter et renforcer les frontières sociales - telles que le sexe, l'ethnicité ou la religion - tout en les remettant en question ou en les subvertissant. Les traditions orales qui reflètent l'imbrication des vies sociales des juifs et des musulmans des montagnes de l'Atlas suggèrent plutôt un modèle relationnel "à la fois/et".

Affinité au-delà des frontières : Les "deux/et" de Mikhail Bakhtin

Afin d'étudier cet aspect non disjonctif des traditions orales, je me suis inspiré des concepts de dialogue et de polyphonie de Mikhaïl Bakhtine. Bien que Bakhtine, philosophe et critique littéraire russe très influent, ait développé les concepts de dialogisme, de polyphonie et d'hétéroglossie (qui se chevauchent et s'entremêlent) pour les appliquer au genre du roman (par opposition aux autres genres littéraires), il existe une solide tradition d'études bakhtiniennes chez les spécialistes du folklore[11], que j'utilise dans mes analyses. En fait, la description de la polyphonie faite par Bakhtine pourrait être une description pertinente de la tradition orale : "la vie de la parole est contenue dans son transfert d'une bouche à l'autre, d'un contexte à un autre contexte, d'un collectif social à un autre" (Bakhtin 1984:201). Simplifiant à l'extrême ces concepts par souci de concision, le dialogue de Bakhtin repose sur l'idée que "toute parole est un maillon d'une chaîne d'autres paroles organisée de manière très complexe" (Bakhtin 1986:69). La polyphonie s'appuie sur cette idée : "La polyphonie ne se réfère pas littéralement à un certain nombre de voix, mais à la qualité collective d'un énoncé individuel, c'est-à-dire à la capacité de mon énoncé d'incarner l'énoncé de quelqu'un d'autre même s'il est le mien, ce qui crée ainsi une relation dialogique entre

[10] Il ne s'agit pas de nier la position inférieure des Juifs dans la hiérarchie sociale et politique lorsqu'ils sont sous la domination d'une majorité musulmane, mais cette hiérarchie n'a pas toujours été

[11] Par exemple, Richard Bauman, Charles Briggs, Jane Hill, Deborah Kapchan et Amy Shuman.

les contradictions entre le présent et le passé, entre les différentes époques du passé, entre les différents groupes socio-idéologiques du présent... et ainsi de suite" (Bakhtin 1986:291).

Ce cadre théorique permet de clarifier le fonctionnement du "tout ou rien" dans l'interaction simultanée de la différence et de la solidarité sociale. Par exemple, le dialogue bakhtinien n'aplanit pas les conflits ; il permet plutôt de laisser les tensions non résolues, et peut-être même de privilégier la tension à la résolution. C'est précisément ce que nous verrons dans de nombreuses traditions orales berbères. Les concepts de dialogisme et de polyphonie permettent ainsi d'inclure des perspectives et des voix incommensurables, ce qui entraîne la multivocalité des récits. Comme l'a écrit Deborah Kapchan dans son livre sur les musiciens Gnawan dans le sud du Maroc, en paraphrasant Bakhtin (1981) : "Le dialogue n'est pas seulement un dialogue ; c'est une revitalisation - toutes les voix apportant leurs messages (parfois multiples et contradictoires), qui sont vécus et interprétés différemment par chaque participant" (Kapchan 2007:248n21).

Ainsi, les concepts de dialogue et de polyphonie de Bakhtin fournissent un cadre pour ma discussion des interprétations typiquement multiples, et parfois contradictoires et/ou dialogiques des récits de mes interlocuteurs. Au milieu de cette polyphonie, une communauté discursive de juifs et de musulmans a émergé, construite non seulement sur une culture commune, mais aussi sur une production culturelle partagée, et dont l'esthétique et l'humour communs étaient des composantes essentielles. L'aspect créatif de cette production a permis aux participants - par le partage des genres, des conventions et de la poétique, ainsi que par l'adoption du point de vue de l'autre qu'implique la narration dialogique - d'embrasser et de rejeter "l'autre" juif ou musulman. Comme l'a fait remarquer Bauman : "Pour la plupart des formes de folklore, un code linguistique commun est également nécessaire pour la communication verbale artistique. La condition préalable la plus fondamentale de la communication verbale artistique reste une esthétique partagée du langage parlé" (Bauman 1971:41). Ces codes esthétiques partagés et ces conventions artistiques ont fourni des formes socialement acceptées pour exprimer la différence, comme nous le verrons, par exemple, dans les duels poétiques et les insultes analysés tout au long de cette thèse. Les formes poétiques permettent d'engager - et même d'embrasser - le conflit d'une manière dialogique et souvent humoristique. Comme le concept de dialogue de Bakhtin ne permet pas d'aplanir les différences, les narrateurs peuvent tenir et tiennent effectivement les deux points de vue, même si parfois avec jugement. Ainsi, l'utilisation des concepts de dialogue et de polyphonie dans mon analyse du matériel fourni par mes interlocuteurs met en évidence les ambiguïtés et les caractéristiques multivalentes trop souvent négligées dans les approches réductrices de ce matériel.

Il est important de noter que ces concepts de dialogisme et de polyphonie s'opposent à l'idée d'un discours monolithique ou autoritaire, comme l'a montré le développement bakhtinien ultérieur, par exemple dans les écrits du théoricien politique Andrew Robinson :

> Le dialogue n'est pas simplement des perspectives différentes sur le même monde. Il implique la répartition d'éléments totalement incompatibles entre différentes perspectives de valeur égale. Bakhtin critique le point de vue selon lequel un désaccord signifie qu'au moins une des personnes doit avoir tort. Parce que de nombreux points de vue existent, la vérité exige de

[12]La nature de ce partage sera discutée tout au long de la thèse. La reformulation par Bashkow de la conception de la culture d'Edward Sapir correspond à la culture des montagnes de l'Atlas : "L'idée que la perception d'une culture commune par les gens est fondée davantage sur des relations de compréhension mutuelle que sur une réelle similitude ou identité. Ce qu'il faut, c'est que les gens puissent se comprendre, ne serait-ce que partiellement et imparfaitement" (Bashkow 2004:452, en référence à Sapir 1949 [1932a]).

> de la transcendance de la différence (comme dans Hegel ; c'est une différence majeure entre le dialogue et la dialectique). La séparation et la simultanéité sont présentes en permanence. Il n'y a pas un seul sens à trouver dans le monde, mais une vaste multitude de sens contestés. (Robinson 2011)

Ce cadre théorique permet de consteller les voix musulmanes et juives. Il nous permet de voir non seulement comment les musulmans et les juifs parlent séparément les uns *des autres*, mais aussi comment ils incorporent les voix des uns et des autres dans leurs récits, et parlent à *travers* et *pour les uns et les* autres. En fait, M. Bakhtin lui-même reconnaît que ce qu'il décrit dans ses romans s'applique au discours verbal : "Nous trouvons un monde riche de formes diverses qui transmettent, imitent et représentent, sous divers angles, la parole, le discours et le langage d'autrui" (Bakhtin 1981:50). Pour Bakhtin, son concept de dialogue chevauche celui de l'intertextualité : "Notre discours, c'est-à-dire toutes nos paroles (y compris les œuvres créatives), est rempli des paroles des autres, de divers degrés d'altérité ou de "notre propre nature", de divers degrés de conscience et de détachement. Ces mots d'autrui portent en eux leur propre expression, leur propre ton évaluatif, que nous assimilons, retravaillons et accentuons" (Bakhtin 1986:89).

Enfin, l'utilisation de la polyphonie par les narrateurs pour raconter les histoires que j'ai enregistrées permet l'expression poétique de l'ambivalence qui imprègne les souvenirs de mes interlocuteurs. L'ambivalence permet de tenir simultanément des contradictions, comme l'affection et le dédain. Les musulmans et les juifs se considéraient autrefois - et se souviennent encore aujourd'hui - avec un mélange d'admiration et de dérision, d'affection et de mépris. Ainsi, s'il est parfois vrai, comme l'écrit Bauman, qu'"un seul et même texte peut signaler l'hostilité dans une situation mais la solidarité dans une autre" (1971:39), j'ai trouvé de nombreux "textes oraux" contenant la perspective "à la fois/et" de Bakhtin plutôt que la perspective "soit/ou" de ces tendances apparemment contradictoires.

L'ambivalence est un lien crucial entre mon cadre théorique et la recherche sur les relations entre juifs et musulmans. L'ambivalence nous amène à dépasser le motif soit réducteur des études passées qui réduisaient les relations à l'harmonie ou à l'hostilité - ou à la tolérance par rapport à la persécution des Juifs - (avec un auteur qui préconise l'une ou l'autre vision pour un temps et un lieu particuliers). Heureusement, de nombreuses études récentes ont remis en question cette "approche théorique binaire opposée" (Boum 2006:370) par le biais d'études plus nuancées sur la diversité des relations entre les musulmans et les juifs au Moyen-Orient et en Afrique du Nord. [13] En particulier, dans les études axées sur les relations entre les musulmans et les juifs marocains, l'"ambivalence" est souvent un thème qui remplace le paradigme de la polarisation. [14]

Limites et créativité

Si la reconnaissance des frontières a permis des relations personnelles interreligieuses et un

[13] On observe un intérêt croissant pour les relations entre juifs et musulmans en général, dont une grande partie est passionnante et extrêmement précieuse (voir, par exemple, *The Routledge Handbook of Muslim-Jewish Relations* et *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations : From the Origins to the Present Day).* Toutefois, ce qui manque encore dans la plupart de ces travaux d'érudition, c'est un travail ethnographique, comme celui qu'Aomar Boum et moi-même avons réalisé au Maroc. Le récent livre d'Ethan Katz, *The Burdens of Brotherhood : Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France* (2015), intègre des sources ethnographiques ainsi que d'autres sources.

[14] Voir, par exemple : Bilu et Levy 1996, Boum 2013, Chetrit 2002, Lakhsassi 2008, Schroeter, surtout 2002.

et même de les décomposer, offraient des possibilités (et des matériaux) d'expression créative et de collaboration culturelle. L'ambiguïté est "intégrée dans tout système de frontières" et est donc "aussi un espace de potentiel, de créativité et de danger" (Seligman 2012:23). Les traditions orales conservées par mes interlocuteurs témoignent du fait que l'expression créative et la collaboration culturelle sont nées de la négociation, de la construction, du franchissement ou de l'effacement continus des frontières. Les anecdotes reflétant de tels engagements avec les frontières ont été rappelées avec une poignante intensité par mes interlocuteurs ; ces anecdotes ont suscité l'admiration, l'ironie et l'humour au moment où elles se sont produites, ainsi qu'au moment du souvenir. Les traditions orales berbères ont fourni des formes créatives pour jouer avec ces frontières multifonctionnelles. Les frontières sont souvent devenues des frontières mouvantes, poétiquement construites. Le philosophe Ludwig Wittgenstein a noté que

> lorsqu'on trace une frontière, ce peut être pour diverses raisons. Si j'entoure une zone avec une clôture, une ligne ou autre, le but peut être d'empêcher quelqu'un d'entrer ou de sortir ; mais cela peut aussi faire partie d'un jeu et les joueurs sont censés, par exemple, sauter par-dessus la limite. (1997 : 499)[15]

Comme dans les traditions orales berbères, les frontières peuvent être considérées comme faisant partie d'un "jeu" intercommunautaire qui implique que les deux se connaissent, tout en établissant une distinction claire entre musulmans et juifs.

Les identités et les frontières sont étroitement liées. Les gens façonnent leurs identités et donc leurs frontières communes par le biais de récits. "Les frontières peuvent également être valorisées dans le discours contemporain comme le fond sur lequel les transgressions créatives des individus et les identités hybrides, mercurielles et valorisées positivement peuvent être construites" (Bashkow 2004:443). Ce qui est souvent en jeu après tout, *c'est l'*identité dans la négociation de la séparation et de la proximité ; la fluidité des frontières et l'absence de distinction peuvent également être menaçantes, notamment pour la survie des Juifs en tant que groupe religieux minoritaire dans un environnement largement musulman. [16] Étant donné le mélange des juifs et des musulmans dans les villages très unis, la menace de la similarité évoque la notion de Freud du "narcissisme de la différence mineure" (1961:114), comme le dit si bien Jonathan Z. Smith, qui a écrit sur les relations interreligieuses au Moyen-Orient dans l'Antiquité tardive :

> C'est là qu'émerge la véritable urgence d'une "théorie de l'autre". Cette urgence n'est pas due à l'exigence de placer l'"autre", mais plutôt de se.... situer Il ne s'agit pas du "lointain", mais, surtout, du "proche". Le problème n'est pas l'altérité, mais la similitude, parfois même l'identité. (Smith 1985:47)

[15] Je remercie Elizabeth Anne Kelley d'avoir porté cette citation à mon attention.

[16] Cette question a été débattue dans le temps et l'espace au Moyen-Orient et en Afrique du Nord (MENA) et a en fait joué dans les deux sens. Par exemple, l'accent mis par le pacte décrivant le statut minoritaire des non-musulmans sous la domination musulmane *(dhimmis, dont il sera question* plus loin dans la section "Brève histoire") sur les distinctions physiques et sociales entre les musulmans et les non-musulmans suggère qu'en réalité, il y avait des menaces d'assimilation entre les communautés, et donc la nécessité de frontières visuelles distinctes.

période),[17] Steven Wasserstrom suggère que c'est la symbiose elle-même qui a donné l'impulsion à la créativité, en particulier au niveau intellectuel et scientifique. C'est-à-dire que c'est le "problème de la symbiose" et le besoin de différenciation qui ont stimulé la créativité : "Ce problème a poussé les musulmans et les juifs vers de nouveaux sommets et de nouvelles profondeurs de subterfuge, de diatribe, de transaction submergée et de coalition profonde" (Wasserstrom 1995:224). Adaptant et développant la thèse de Wasserstrom, je soutiens que la tension entre le jeu des besoins d'appartenance et de différenciation des musulmans et des juifs des montagnes de l'Atlas du XXe siècle a également stimulé la créativité et un corpus de traditions orales juives-musulmanes.

Les récentes études - en particulier depuis les années 1990 - qui révèlent la richesse des échanges intellectuels entre Juifs et Musulmans à l'époque médiévale remettent en question le modèle d'emprunt et d'influence qui dominait autrefois ces études.
(Bakhos 2006), "pollinisation croisée", "cultures entremêlées" (Lazarus-Yafeh 1992) et "synergie" (Wasserstrom 1995). Cependant, Goitein et d'autres affirment que la période de symbiose créative s'est terminée au XIVe siècle. [19] Mais l'argument de Goitein pour la fin de la symbiose au quatorzième siècle n'est pas convaincant. Ces modèles doivent être appliqués de manière plus complète aux communautés modernes ainsi qu'à leurs traditions orales. Les traditions orales et les formes culturelles partagées du XXe siècle suggèrent qu'une symbiose créative était historiquement en cours.

Mon modèle d'échange culturel dynamique permanent - fondé sur les modèles mentionnés ci-dessus dans les études judéo-islamiques20 - considère les Juifs comme des acteurs actifs dans leur environnement culturel et leurs traditions, plutôt que comme les bénéficiaires d'une acculturation unidirectionnelle qui suggère une influence à sens unique de la culture majoritaire sur la minorité. [21] Car, bien que les Juifs soient la population religieuse minoritaire, la population juive du Maroc a une plus grande importance, comme l'indiquent ses faibles effectifs22 , y compris dans les contributions culturelles. En fait, la constitution marocaine réformée de 2011 reconnaît

17Shlomo Dov Goitein a popularisé et développé le concept de "symbiose créative" pour caractériser l'interaction médiévale entre juifs et musulmans à plusieurs niveaux, notamment culturel, intellectuel et épistémologique ([1955]

18Ce modèle d'"emprunt" "suppose une notion bizarre et injustifiable de propriété sur les pratiques culturelles et les traditions régionales" (Salaymeh 2013:412). En fait, la notion d'"emprunt" suppose des concepts dépassés d'"authenticité" et d'"origines", concepts rejetés comme de fausses constructions par les folkloristes au cours des dernières décennies (voir par exemple Bendix 1997). Les récents travaux d'études judéo-islamiques explorant les sites de contact entre les traditions écrites juives et islamiques qui reflètent la richesse des échanges culturels et intertextuels entre Juifs et Musulmans remettent également en question les motifs d'emprunt et l'influence qui dominaient auparavant le domaine (sans doute parce que les Juifs orientaux allemands du XIXe siècle s'y intéressaient).

19 "Dans les années 1950, Goitein suivait les orientalistes conventionnels qui décrivaient le dernier Moyen-Âge comme une période de déclin de la civilisation islamique" et, avec lui, la symbiose judéo-musulmane (Schroeter 2002:6).

20 J' utilise ce terme de manière vague, car il correspond le plus souvent à des études axées sur les traditions textuelles et intellectuelles médiévales, tandis que les "études judéo-musulmanes " (ou "judéo-musulmanes") correspondent à des études mettant l'accent sur les relations humaines à l'époque moderne.

21Wasserstrom met l'accent sur la transmission interpersonnelle dans l'échange intellectuel entre juifs et musulmans : "Comme Goitein et d'autres l'ont montré, il n'y avait pas de flux unidirectionnel d'influences... il y avait plutôt une synergie" (Wasserstrom 1995:181). Mary Louise Pratt décrit les "concepts trop réducteurs d'acculturation et d'assimilation" comme hiérarchiques et unidirectionnels (Pratt 1991:33).

22Historiquement, les Juifs représentaient en moyenne 3 à 5 % de la population totale du Maroc. Cependant, dans certains endroits spécifiques, le pourcentage était beaucoup plus élevé (comme on le notera pour certains des

l'identité. [23] En outre, comme l'écrit Edward Said : "Toutes les cultures sont impliquées les unes dans les autres ; aucune n'est unique et pure, toutes sont hybrides, hétérogènes, extraordinairement différenciées et non monolithiques" (Said 1993:xxv). En effet, comme étape supplémentaire, je pose l'idée de "coproductions" judéo-musulmanes pour les formes culturelles berbères engagées par les musulmans et les juifs qui reflètent cet échange dynamique. Ces coproductions ont navigué dans la différence de manière créative et ont été construites en collaboration au-delà des frontières

LES TRADITIONS ORALES : ENTRELACER L'ETHNOHISTOIRE ET LA POÉTIQUE

> La valeur de l'information ne survit pas au moment où elle était nouvelle. Il ne vit qu'à ce moment... Une histoire est différente. Elle ne s'épuise pas. Il conserve et concentre sa force et est capable de la libérer même après une longue période. (Benjamin 1936:vii)

Mon choix de centrer ma thèse sur les traditions orales, bien qu'inspiré par la fréquence avec laquelle elles illuminent les témoignages oraux, est également dû à leur valeur en tant que partie de la mémoire de l'histoire. Le folklore et les souvenirs ne peuvent à eux seuls servir à reconstruire l'histoire sociale, mais ils peuvent nous renseigner sur les croyances et les attitudes de la société, tant passées que présentes.

> Les spectacles de folklore ne sont pas de simples répétitions de traditions usées par le temps ; ils constituent plutôt un terrain d'entente entre une tradition textuelle commune et une foule de rencontres humaines uniques, préservant ainsi la vitalité et le dynamisme du passé tout en s'efforçant de donner un sens au présent. (Briggs 1988:xv)

Dans les souvenirs de mes interlocuteurs, les frontières entre "histoires orales" et "traditions orales" n'étaient pas toujours claires. Mes interlocuteurs ont raconté des contes et des blagues comme des événements factuels, et des récits d'événements réels ont parfois circulé comme des "contes populaires". Les anecdotes que j'ai enregistrées révèlent des vérités de croyances, d'expériences et de sentiments. Comme le fait remarquer l'historien de l'oralité Alessandro Portelli, les récits des narrateurs révèlent "non pas la vérité des événements matériels, mais.la vérité du possible : en d'autres termes, la vérité particulière de l'œuvre d'art" (Portelli 1998:38). Les réminiscences reflètent la façon dont le narrateur donne un sens au passé par le biais de la mémoire vivante,

[23] Pour la traduction française, voir http://www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/constitution/constitution_2011_Fr.pdf
Pour la version arabe, voir : http://www.parlement.ma/images/2011/constitution_ar_2011.pdf

[24] J'ai commencé à utiliser ce terme avant de savoir que David Nirenberg l'utilisait dans *Neighboring Faiths : Christianisme, Islam et Judaïsme au Moyen Âge et aujourd'hui* (2014). Mon utilisation de ce terme est très différente : alors qu'il l'utilise pour décrire les identités religieuses en tant que coproductions (et surtout, pour dénaturer la différence religieuse), je l'utilise pour désigner les formes culturelles créées, exprimées et/ou exécutées en collaboration.

J'ignorais également l'influence de ce terme dans le domaine des études scientifiques et technologiques, comme le décrit Sheila Jasanoff : "Nous acquérons un pouvoir explicatif en pensant que les ordres naturels et sociaux sont produits ensemble. La texture de toute période historique... ainsi que de formations culturelles et politiques particulières, ne peut être correctement appréciée que si nous prenons en compte cette coproduction. En bref, la co-production est l'abréviation de la proposition selon laquelle les façons dont nous connaissons et représentons le monde (à la fois la nature et la société) sont inséparables des façons dont nous avons choisi d'y vivre". (Jasanoff 2004:2).

Un autre atout important des récits oraux est qu'ils contribuent à l'histoire culturelle de populations dont la voix ne serait peut-être pas entendue autrement, et ce faisant, ils mettent "leurs propres récits en dialogue avec les discours dominants" (Briggs 2012:96). "L'histoire orale", note Portelli, "est plus intrinsèquement elle-même lorsqu'elle écoute des orateurs qui ne sont pas déjà des protagonistes reconnus dans la sphère publique" (Portelli 1998:26). En outre, Portelli souligne que "le droit de parler, surtout de soi-même, n'est pas automatiquement assumé, surtout parmi les groupes socialement défavorisés auxquels les historiens de l'oralité s'adressent le plus souvent. Dans le folklore, l'autorité découle principalement de la tradition" (Portelli 1998:28). Cette citation suggère une autre fonction de l'inclusion des traditions orales par mes interlocuteurs : en racontant des anecdotes ou des chansons qui ont circulé en tant que traditions (et souvent racontées comme des événements "réels"), les narrateurs ont revendiqué une certaine autorité qu'ils ne ressentent peut-être pas en parlant directement de leur propre vie. Mon projet se concentre sur les voix sous-représentées des populations rurales des montagnes de l'Atlas. Les cohortes musulmanes et juives de mon étude se situent aujourd'hui au bas de la hiérarchie du pouvoir socioéconomique et politique dans leurs pays de résidence respectifs. L'importance des positions socioculturelles et économiques marginales respectives des musulmans berbères ruraux au Maroc et des juifs marocains en Israël est examinée dans le deuxième chapitre.

Traditions orales et chemins compliqués de la mémoire et du discours

Mon étude soulève des questions sur le fait de savoir si et comment les traditions orales servent de véhicules de la mémoire culturelle et pour celle-ci. D'une part, comment ces traditions peuvent-elles servir de dépositaires d'informations sur les relations sociales passées ? Mais aussi, pourquoi se souvient-on du passé à travers ces récits ? Si la mémoire culturelle n'est pas "ce qui s'est passé" mais plutôt les récits que les gens se fabriquent aujourd'hui à partir d'événements passés, quel genre de passé mes interlocuteurs construisent-ils ? Comment ce passé leur servait-il actuellement (qu'il représente ou non avec exactitude une réalité sociale antérieure) ? [25] Il n'est pas toujours possible de faire le tri entre le passé et le présent dans les réminiscences ; il y a une interaction constante entre le passé et le présent, au sens bakhtinien de tenir des versions différentes sans résoudre les tensions et les différences entre elles. En parlant dans le présent, mes interlocuteurs étaient en dialogue avec le passé. C'est pourquoi leurs souvenirs ont constitué une précieuse occasion d'approfondir les détails qui ont atteint un niveau poignant dans leur mémoire plus d'un demi-siècle plus tard, ce qui a constitué une partie essentielle de mon étude.

Les traditions orales tracent les chemins compliqués de la mémoire : d'une part, les histoires sont des idéalisations du passé ; d'autre part, les traditions orales peuvent couper à travers des souvenirs idéologiquement reconstruits, ou parfois être en interaction avec eux. Le folklore a le pouvoir de filtrer à travers les fissures de l'inconscient et de mettre en évidence les sites d'anxiété et de tensions intercommunautaires. De cette façon, les traditions orales permettent de transmettre des perspectives nuancées et d'accéder au-delà de la surface des souvenirs, au-delà de la nostalgie.

De plus, les différents filtres de la situation politique contemporaine interagissent avec la nostalgie. J'ai rencontré plusieurs couches de discours de mes interlocuteurs concernant les souvenirs des relations judéo-musulmanes au Maroc. La couche la plus externe était le discours sociopolitique contemporain basé sur la dichotomie (Juifs contre Musulmans, Juifs contre Arabes, Israéliens contre Palestiniens).[26]

[25] Je suis reconnaissant à Jane Goodman d'avoir soulevé ces questions après avoir lu une toute première ébauche de

[26] Pour un examen approfondi de cette évolution dans la perception des Juifs par quatre générations de musulmans dans la région saharienne d'Akka, au sud du Maroc, voir Boum 2013.

Dans la deuxième couche des orateurs, ils ont révélé leur préoccupation pour la première en y réagissant par une vision idéalisée du passé, dans laquelle, tant pour les juifs âgés que pour les musulmans, l'"autre" désormais absent est devenu un élément majeur de la construction nostalgique du passé. Cette construction est également déformée par le prisme d'un présent moins qu'idéal, et dans lequel le discours national dominant oppose les "Juifs" aux "Arabes"[27] (et/ou les "Juifs" aux "Musulmans" ; les Israéliens aux Palestiniens). [28] Il est important de noter qu'une asymétrie inhérente aux types de souvenirs et à la nostalgie de chaque groupe religieux reflétait les expériences divergentes et distinctes des villageois musulmans qui restaient par rapport aux Juifs qui partaient pour un nouveau pays, et non de manière insignifiante pour une nouvelle langue. Pour les Juifs, la nostalgie d'avoir quitté leur terre natale était plus forte, et les expressions d'attachement à leurs villages, avec leur paysage particulier et leurs traditions locales, faisaient surface avec une poignante intensité. Pour les musulmans, il y avait la nostalgie d'un groupe dominant pour sa minorité disparue, en tant qu'"autre" exotique à l'intérieur ; par exemple, j'ai remarqué que les musulmans s'intéressaient davantage aux traditions juives, à la nourriture, etc. que l'inverse. La soudaineté et la totalité de la rupture provoquée et mise en œuvre presque entièrement par des circonstances et des forces extérieures à la vie commune du village peuvent également contribuer à la romanisation du passé par chaque groupe. **(**Et les courtes visites des Juifs dans leurs villages d'origine au cours des dernières décennies semblent avoir alimenté la nostalgie des deux côtés).

La troisième couche du discours, qui constitue mon principal centre d'intérêt, est celle du folklore et des autres traditions orales. À ce niveau, l'ambivalence et le mélange d'admiration et de dérision qui caractérisent les relations intercommunautaires deviennent apparents. Il était souvent difficile d'amener mes interlocuteurs à parler directement des tensions ou des problèmes passés entre juifs et musulmans, et une question directe se heurtait généralement à un refus d'admettre qu'il y en avait eu. Au lieu de cela, les tensions et les conflits s'exprimaient à travers les anecdotes et les chansons qui faisaient partie des souvenirs. Tout comme les contes, les blagues et les chansons permettaient souvent aux participants d'exprimer des sentiments ou des attitudes non admissibles dans le discours ordinaire dans le passé, ils peuvent fonctionner de la même manière dans les réminiscences du présent, révélant des tensions et des conflits que les narrateurs pourraient autrement être réticents à discuter ou à reconnaître. Bien entendu, à l'inverse, les tensions découlant d'événements et de développements ultérieurs peuvent être projetées en arrière sur les récits, les blagues, etc. par les narrateurs ou des personnes extérieures.

Contextualisation et Historicisation

Afin de contextualiser et d'historiciser le matériel que j'ai enregistré, je n'ai pas analysé les traditions orales isolément des autres sources, mais j'ai plutôt engagé un dialogue avec diverses sources écrites lorsque cela était possible, ainsi qu'une conversation avec des universitaires dans les divers domaines que mon projet aborde. En cela, mon projet relève le défi lancé par des universitaires comme Isabel Hofmeyr, qui avertit que "sans une historisation soigneuse des formes orales, on risque de les reléguer dans un temps et un espace monolithique et indifférencié. On risque aussi de projeter le présent dans le passé" (Hofmeyr1996:90)...

L'historicité et la décontextualisation ont fait défaut à de nombreuses collections du folklore marocain. Historiquement, ces collections folkloriques ont été constituées dans le but de renforcer

[27] Dans le discours contemporain, les "musulmans berbères" sont souvent assimilés à des "arabes" ou à des

[28] On voit ici la superposition d'identités politiques et nationalistes sur ce qui était auparavant considéré comme des identités religieuses, notamment par mes interlocuteurs, avant la domination des nationalismes juifs et arabes.

des projets politiques/idéologiques (français au Maroc et sionistes en Israël). [29] Cela signifie généralement qu'il faut accentuer les différences entre les groupes religieux ou ethniques, annulant ainsi les affiliations qui transcendent les différences religieuses ou autres. Par exemple, les deux principaux recueils de récits populaires juifs marocains, publiés à près de trois décennies d'intervalle (en hébreu et en anglais) - *Seventy-one Tales of the Jews of Morocco (*1964), édité par Dov Noy, et *Jewish Moroccan Folk Narratives from Israel (*1993), édité par Aliza Shenhar et Haya Bar-Itzhak - ne sont pas spécifiquement axés sur les relations entre juifs et musulmans, mais les éditeurs les présentent comme tels dans leurs introductions, tirant des conclusions des récits sur ces relations sans les mettre en contexte. Ces lectures ne permettent pas de nuances, d'ambivalence ou de complexité dans les récits - aspects que nous explorerons tout au long de ce mémoire - mais perpétuent plutôt des conceptions essentialistes et antagonistes des identités et des relations juives et musulmanes/arabes, et effacent les riches couches d'interactions diverses. Les collections de contes populaires comme celles-ci contribuent à "réduire, fixer et, en fin de compte, contenir la différence" (Lau 2000:71). En revanche, les anecdotes que mes interlocuteurs m'ont racontées résistent à la culture de la victimisation juive mise en avant dans ces collections. Une exception notable à ces recueils de contes juifs marocains est le recueil *Folktales of the Canadian Sephardim*, compilé par André Elbaz, publié au Canada (1982). Elbaz est lui-même juif marocain et a recueilli les récits dans la langue choisie par le narrateur (souvent l'arabe marocain) auprès de juifs marocains qui avaient immigré au Canada plutôt qu'en Israël. Elbaz ne fait aucune mention du conflit entre Juifs et Musulmans dans la discussion détaillée des thèmes de son introduction. Bien que son volume ne soit qu'un exemple parmi d'autres, il suggère que l'accent mis sur le conflit interreligieux dans les volumes édités par Israël - par des Juifs ashkénazes - reflète à la fois le discours sioniste et le conflit actuel entre Israël et la Palestine.

BREF CONTEXTE HISTORIQUE ET GÉOGRAPHIQUE

Les Berbères, ou Imazighen ("peuple libre" ; Amazigh, au singulier) sont les premiers habitants connus de l'Afrique du Nord. [30] On ne sait pas quand les Juifs sont arrivés au Maroc, mais certaines théories sur l'origine suggèrent qu'elle pourrait avoir eu lieu au 6ème siècle avant JC, suite à la destruction de

[29] En particulier, les programmes politiques et idéologiques du colonialisme français et de la construction de la nation sioniste dépendaient de l'accentuation du conflit entre les musulmans et les juifs pour justifier leurs interventions en tant que sauveurs de la population juive. Il existe également plusieurs collections de contes populaires berbères éditées en France, mais sans analyse ni contextualisation. Bien qu'elles soient racontées par des musulmans, presque toutes les collections en

[30] "Amazighen" est le terme berbère pour le peuple, et "Tamazight" est le terme officiel pour tous les dialectes berbères, ainsi que le nom du dialecte spécifique du Moyen Atlas marocain et des montagnes du Haut Atlas du nord et de l'est. "Tashelhit" est le nom du dialecte berbère du sud-ouest du Haut Atlas et de l'Anti-Atlas, les régions principales de mes recherches. J'utiliserai le terme "Tashelhit" plutôt que le terme berbère pour désigner un terme spécifique à ce dialecte. Les personnes qui parlent le tashelhit sont appelées "Ishelhin" dans ce dialecte. J'utilise le terme "berbère" pour le peuple et la langue, par souci de clarté, et comme le mot le plus familier en anglais sans les connotations négatives qu'il a en français (Sadiqi 2012:121n1), ni la valence négative qu'il avait lorsqu'il était utilisé à l'origine par les Romains (Hoffman 2008:14).

Il existe un troisième dialecte berbère au Maroc, dans les montagnes du Rif au nord, le "Tarifit", mais cela ne fait pas partie de mon domaine de recherche. Les populations juives des montagnes du Rif se sont presque entièrement déplacées vers les grandes villes, telles que Chefchaouen, Tétouan et Oujda, à la fin du XIXe siècle et au début du XXe, où elles parlaient le judéo-arabe ou le judéo-espagnol, sans aucune trace de tarifit (Chetrit 2007:228n16).

le Premier Temple à Jérusalem, et/ou après la destruction du Second Temple en 70 de notre ère. [31] Malgré l'inaccessibilité des montagnes de l'Atlas (dans certaines régions, même jusqu'à l'époque des souvenirs de mes interlocuteurs), d'importants itinéraires caravaniers les traversaient historiquement de l'Afrique au Moyen-Orient, en partie parce que le terrain difficile rendait les caravanes moins vulnérables aux attaques que les itinéraires plus directs (Jacques-Meunie 1982). Les montagnes de l'Atlas comprennent des régions aux contrastes saisissants, des vallées luxuriantes aux sommets de plus de 12 000 pieds d'altitude, de vastes zones arides-désertiques et des déserts aux oasis et aux vallées fluviales. Les Juifs se sont installés dans tous les centres caravaniers et au-delà, jouant un rôle actif dans les échanges et le commerce.

Quelle que soit la date précise de leur arrivée, les populations juives étaient bien établies dans tout le Maroc, y compris dans les régions montagneuses de l'Atlas, au moment des conquêtes arabo-islamiques des VIIe et VIIIe siècles. Ces conquêtes ont entraîné la conversion, forcée ou non, des non-monothéistes - c'est-à-dire des Berbères de l'époque - à l'Islam au cours des siècles suivants. Certains Juifs ont peut-être été berbérisés avant cette période, et on pense que certains Berbères se sont convertis au judaïsme avant et pendant l'islamisation. [32] Cependant, bien qu'islamisées, les communautés berbères des chaînes de montagnes du Rif et de l'Atlas n'ont pas été arabisées, c'est-à-dire qu'elles ont résisté à l'adoption de l'arabe comme langue principale jusqu'à nos jours, bien que l'arabe classique conserve une place importante dans l'observance religieuse.

Il ne reste que des vestiges de l'ancienne religion païenne des Berbères, mais de nombreux aspects ont été intégrés dans les coutumes par les Juifs et les musulmans qui les vivent comme faisant partie intégrante de leurs religions respectives. Les Juifs qui vivaient parmi les Berbères ont conservé une forte identité religieuse même après la conquête arabo-musulmane aux VIIe et VIIIe siècles de notre ère et l'islamisation des Berbères qui s'en est suivie. La conversion des Juifs à l'islam s'est également poursuivie, que ce soit à titre individuel ou, parfois, en communautés entières (selon les traditions orales) au fil des siècles. Les diverses populations des montagnes de l'Atlas comprenaient historiquement des Berbères, des Arabes et des groupes d'Afrique subsaharienne.

Une forte présence juive séfarade au Maroc a suivi l'expulsion des Juifs d'Espagne en 1492, principalement dans les zones urbaines et côtières, où ils se sont installés et où il y avait souvent des populations juives arabophones établies de longue date. Il y avait un mélange complexe entre ces différentes populations juives, mais certains groupes sont restés culturellement - sinon linguistiquement - distincts à bien des égards, et continuent de l'être jusqu'à aujourd'hui.

Relations asymétriques et hiérarchies compliquées :
Statut de *Dhimmi* et patronage tribal

Étant donné que les Juifs vivaient sous la domination d'une majorité musulmane, il y avait, bien sûr, un différentiel de pouvoir entre les musulmans et les Juifs et une hiérarchie sociopolitique. [33] Cela se manifestait notamment dans deux systèmes : le statut historique de *dhimmi de la* population juive et le système de patronage tribal. En outre, l'identité juive inclut le

[31] Pour une discussion sur la bourse sur les arrivées et les origines des Juifs au Maroc, y compris les théories et les traditions, voir Schroeter 2007.

[32] Pour une discussion approfondie de la bourse sur ces possibilités et théories, voir Schroeter 2007.

[33] L' administration coloniale française, en se qualifiant quelque peu par euphémisme de "protectorat", a permis aux institutions marocaines de rester en place sous la souveraineté du sultan, y compris son rôle religieux de "commandant des fidèles" (c'est-à-dire des musulmans) et les juifs comme ses sujets (Schroeter et Chetrit 2006).

"Eretz Yisrael" [Héb., terre d'Israël]), donc par extension, des "étrangers", mais en même temps ils étaient profondément enracinés. [34]

Les juifs et les chrétiens vivant sous la domination islamique (dans tout le Moyen-Orient et l'Afrique du Nord) étaient des *dhimmis (de l'*arabe pour "protection") en vertu du "pacte d'Oumar", le contrat putatif concrétisant le statut de *dhimma pour* les peuples monothéistes sous les règles islamiques. Les Juifs sont devenus les seuls *dhimmis* au Maroc (et dans la plupart des pays d'Afrique du Nord) après la disparition (ou la conversion) de tous les chrétiens de la région au XIIe siècle. [35] Le contrat garantissait une protection administrative et la liberté de pratiquer la religion pour les monothéistes non musulmans vivant sous la domination islamique, en échange du paiement d'un impôt sur les sondages *(jizya)* et du respect d'un ensemble particulier de restrictions. [36] En réalité, l'application des restrictions variait considérablement, tant sur le plan historique que géographique. En particulier, dans les régions de l'Atlas marocain, l'application des restrictions, autres que la *jizya,* était très irrégulière. [37] Cependant, étant donné la position historique des Juifs en tant que *dhimmi,* et en tant que seule minorité religieuse au Maroc, ils occupaient généralement un statut sociopolitique inférieur à celui des musulmans. Si des cas de discrimination se sont produits, qu'ils soient directement dus aux restrictions imposées par la *dhimmi* ou à un mépris plus général de la majorité envers ceux qui pratiquaient ce qui était considéré comme la religion inférieure (les Juifs considéraient également que les musulmans pratiquaient la religion inférieure), l'antagonisme organisé entre les groupes était rare. En outre, la hiérarchie sociopolitique n'était ni statique ni aussi simple que le statut de *dhimmi et le* système de patronage tribal le suggèrent. Par exemple, l'inégalité était souvent compensée par la différence économique, une protection spéciale par ou l'accès aux autorités, etc. Ainsi, considérer l'ensemble de l'expérience juive dans le monde islamique à travers une conception monolithique du *dhimmi* est limitatif et conduit à une image historique déformée, tout comme le fait de considérer le statut de dhimmi à travers le filtre des conflits politiques actuels. [38]

Ni mes interlocuteurs musulmans ni mes interlocuteurs juifs n'ont utilisé le terme *dhimmi, et* ils n'ont pas semblé en comprendre la signification lorsque je leur ai posé la question, de sorte qu'il ne semble pas présent dans les souvenirs récents. Bien sûr, en tant que terme technique et juridique,

[34] Pour repenser et compliquer les concepts de patrie et de diaspora dans la perspective des Juifs marocains, voir André Levy 2001.

[35] "Le christianisme nord-africain n'a pas survécu aux époques almoravide et almohade (du Xe au XIIe siècle), peut-être parce que les chrétiens autochtones ont été identifiés comme faisant partie de la menace posée à la domination islamique par l'Espagne chrétienne voisine" (Ben-Layashi et Maddy-Weitzman 2010:91)

[36] Le pacte lui-même est de provenance inconnue et on pense qu'il date du VIIIe ou du IXe siècle.

[37] Bien que les années dont mes interlocuteurs se sont souvenus tombent surtout pendant la période du protectorat français au Maroc (1912-1956), le statut de *dhimmi n'*a pas été officiellement annulé avant l'indépendance du Maroc en 1956. "Le Protectorat français établi au Maroc en 1912, légitimé par l'idée de préserver les institutions autochtones, a maintenu la monarchie, un souverain islamique avec ses sujets musulmans et juifs. Alors que les handicaps civils associés au statut de *dhimmi ont* été éliminés, les Juifs sont restés des sujets *dhimmi* indigènes du sultan, maintenant sous la tutelle supposée des Français" (Schroeter 2016:45 ; voir aussi Schroeter et Chetrit 2006).

[38] "D'une part, le fait de ne voir les Juifs que comme des victimes obscurcit toute agence que les Juifs avaient en les réduisant à des objets d'oppression. D'autre part, affirmer que les Juifs et les musulmans s'entendaient généralement bien, c'est ignorer les véritables inégalités religieuses et sociales inhérentes à la société islamique" (Marglin 2013:17). Ces dernières - "les véritables inégalités religieuses et sociales inhérentes à la société islamique" - ne peuvent être généralisées, mais doivent être examinées de manière thématique, chronologique et historique, comme le fait Marglin dans son projet et comme je le fais

[39] Harvey Goldberg rapporte que ses interlocuteurs (Juifs de Tripoli, Libye résidant en Israël) ont suggéré une signification similaire, peut-être en raison d'une prononciation différente du mot :

considérer le rôle de l'usage des langues à la fois dans le renforcement et la remise en cause de la hiérarchie sociopolitique.

Plus frais dans la mémoire de mes interlocuteurs, le système de patronage tribal dans les montagnes de l'Atlas, qui ajoutait une autre couche au statut de *dhimmi, le* remplaçant parfois, coexistant parfois avec lui. [40] Ce système offrait également une protection d'une part (en échange du paiement d'une taxe), et un statut sociopolitique inférieur d'autre part. Les Juifs ne formaient pas de tribus à part entière, mais étaient placés sous la protection des tribus musulmanes berbères (tout comme les tribus musulmanes plus faibles). Ce statut conférait aux Juifs une neutralité (pour la plupart) dans les combats intertribaux parfois féroces des derniers siècles, dont la plupart concernaient le contrôle des ressources plutôt que les différences ethniques ou religieuses. [41] Le statut protégé s'accompagnait même de certains privilèges. [42] La neutralité a également servi aux Juifs en tant que marchands ambulants (en leur accordant l'accès) et dans l'économie de marché. [43] Ainsi, la stratification sociale et la hiérarchie de ces communautés de l'Atlas étaient plus compliquées que ces systèmes - dhimmi et tribal - pourraient le suggérer, comme nous le verrons dans le corps de la thèse.

Plusieurs facteurs antérieurs à l'émigration des Juifs ont contribué à l'environnement interreligieux relativement coopératif, dont les traditions culturelles communes faisaient partie intégrante. Les musulmans et les juifs des montagnes de l'Atlas étaient pour la plupart économiquement interdépendants, plutôt que compétitifs (il y avait bien sûr des exceptions, comme la concurrence économique mentionnée plus haut à la fin du XIXe siècle à Demnat, et la

> À plusieurs reprises, les Juifs tripolitains, voulant démontrer la proximité que les musulmans ressentaient à leur égard, ont dit qu'ils appelleraient les Juifs *dimmi*. Le terme, tel que prononcé dans la langue vernaculaire locale, a été expliqué comme dérivant du mot pour le sang, l'implication étant que le musulman traitait le juif avec affection, comme étant "une partie de lui-même". Mes interlocuteurs n'ont pas considéré ce terme comme faisant partie d'un statut officiel dans le droit musulman, mais... il est apparu clairement que cette notion continuait à porter certaines de ses significations classiques de faiblesse et de dépendance. Il est possible que ce soit une interprétation juive placée sur un concept musulman, ce qui atténuerait sa gravité aux yeux des Juifs. J'ai cependant l'impression que mes informateurs ont fait état d'un aspect de la culture "populaire" qui était partagé à la fois par (certains) Juifs et par les Musulmans. Quoi qu'il en soit, cette interprétation... peut être considérée comme une sorte de *méconnaissance* (Bourdieu 1977) qui bouleverse les doctrines officielles tout en les maintenant et met en évidence la nécessité d'apprécier la conscience populaire dans les matières inscrites dans les sources

[40] Le système de patronage tribal est également probablement antérieur à l'islam au Maroc, comme le suppose Goldberg

[41] Par exemple, l'informateur de John Waterbury, Hadj Brahim, d'une région non loin de Taliouine, où j'ai effectué une grande partie de mon travail sur le terrain, lui a dit : "Avant l'arrivée des Français, nous nous battions tout le temps, mais nous avions deux règles que personne ne violait jamais. Nous ne tolérerions jamais la prostitution parmi nos femmes, et quoi que nous nous fassions, nous ne ferions jamais de mal à un cheveu sur la tête d'un Juif" (Waterbury 1972:27). Bien sûr, il y a eu des exceptions au cours des siècles, en fonction de certains dirigeants, comme les périodes de conversions forcées sous les Almohades, ou en raison de la concurrence économique accrue qui a conduit à des conflits, comme à la fin du XIXe siècle

[42] Again, de Waterbury : "Hadj Brahim est convaincu du bon traitement des Juifs qui vivaient parmi les Ammiln, surtout à Tahala. Nous n'avons jamais touché les Juifs ; dans tous nos combats, ils ont toujours été protégés. Ils vivaient bien mieux que nous. Ils mangeaient du blé quand nous mangions de l'orge ; ils mangeaient des oeufs quand nous n'avions que du lait de chèvre. Je ne sais pas pourquoi ils sont tous partis [en Israël]. Mais c'est probablement parce que chaque Juif pense qu'il ira directement au paradis s'il meurt à Jérusalem" (1972:28).

[43] " Le fait même que les Juifs ne soient pas enracinés dans la société rurale, avec des liens tribaux ou de parenté, signifie qu'ils ne constituent pas une menace politique et sont donc plus dignes de confiance en matière économique. Paradoxalement, cette marginalité était la garantie d'une neutralité qu'il était dans l'intérêt de toutes les parties de maintenir dans des conditions normales". (Schroeter 1988:86)

La coopération entre voisins juifs et musulmans est d'autant plus cruciale, en tant que partenaires pour la survie. En outre, les petites communautés villageoises étroitement liées, dans lesquelles tout le monde se connaissait, ont donné lieu à de nombreux niveaux d'échanges sociaux. Les traditions orales (chansons, duels de poésie, anecdotes) présentées dans ce mémoire, ainsi que les analyses, éclairent ces différents aspects de la vie interreligieuse et intracommunautaire.

Départ des Juifs de l'Atlas (et du Maroc)

Ma thèse porte sur le passé mémorable de mes interlocuteurs, principalement dans les années 1940 et 1950 (et parfois au début des années 1960), avant le départ massif des Juifs de l'Atlas. Ces années ont été cruciales dans l'histoire juive marocaine, couvrant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, la création de l'État d'Israël en 1948, l'indépendance du Maroc de la France en 1956 et l'émigration massive des communautés juives, principalement vers Israël. Bien qu'elles ne soient pas totalement isolées du reste du monde, ces communautés rurales ont été moins touchées que les centres urbains par des événements historiques tels que la Seconde Guerre mondiale, et en particulier l'occupation de Vichy au Maroc - dont certains effets ont atteint les villages - et la création de l'État d'Israël en 1948 - événements qui allaient cependant être des facteurs majeurs de la disparition des communautés juives. Pourtant, bien que relativement peu touchés, ils n'étaient pas totalement ignorants. Les nouvelles se sont répandues, surtout en raison de la forte interconnexion des communautés juives. Voir Bontoux (1951) et Schroeter (2011) pour l'activité sioniste dans la région de Taliouine. Cependant, ces événements ne figurent pas en bonne place dans les récits abordés dans cette thèse.

Les migrations vers les villes, tant des Juifs des montagnes de l'Atlas que des musulmans, avaient déjà commencé à la fin du XIXe siècle, pour des raisons économiques dues à la sécheresse et au déclin des routes commerciales à la suite de l'intervention européenne en Afrique de l'Ouest et au Maroc. Cependant, des populations juives importantes vivaient encore dans les villages de l'Atlas lorsque les envoyés sionistes ont commencé à les cibler pour l'immigration au début des années 1950 (suivie d'une autre vague au début des années 1960). Après la dévastation du judaïsme européen pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, les sionistes considéraient le Maroc comme une ressource majeure44 de Juifs, en particulier comme un potentiel de main-d'œuvre "non qualifiée" pour le nouvel État d'Israël, ainsi que pour peupler des zones de la nouvelle nation considérées comme plus dangereuses et moins souhaitables en raison du conflit permanent entre Israël et les Palestiniens, que le nouvel État avait à la fois occupés et déplacés. De nombreuses villes de "développement" où des immigrants marocains se sont installés ont été construites sur les ruines de villages palestiniens (Khalidi 1992),[45] et certaines ont été installées dans ce qui est devenu des bidonvilles urbains. Néanmoins, pour les villageois juifs, la diminution des possibilités économiques dans les campagnes marocaines, ainsi que la surpopulation et la pauvreté croissantes dans les villes, ont fait de l'immigration en Israël une option attrayante. [46] Alors qu'il restait des

[44] Il y avait plusieurs termes utilisés à cet effet, porteurs de connotations négatives, tels que *"homer enoshi*" (Héb., matériel humain). Ce terme était également utilisé pour les juifs européens survivants de la Shoah ainsi que pour les juifs

[45] "Lorsque l'on parle individuellement de ces villes construites au début de la création de l'État, on les appelle souvent "villes de développement", un euphémisme insidieux qui traduit davantage une absence de développement que sa présence" (Kordova 2012). Pour en savoir plus sur les villes de développement et les immigrants du Moyen-Orient et d'Afrique du Nord en particulier, voir Yiftachel et Tzfadia (2004).

46Jusqu'à la Seconde Guerre mondiale, le mouvement sioniste s'était peu intéressé aux Juifs d'Afrique du Nord, et vice versa. Voir Tsur (1998, 2009) pour en savoir plus sur le sionisme et le départ des Juifs ruraux du Maroc et leur immigration en Israël. Voir Oren Kosansky (2003) et Szulc (2005) sur les départs des Juifs marocains de manière plus générale.

régions pré-sahariennes du sud du Maroc, même si quelques individus ou familles sont restés à certains endroits, même jusqu'au début du XXIe siècle. À son apogée, la population juive du Maroc au milieu du XXe siècle était d'environ 270 000 personnes sur une population totale de onze millions. Aujourd'hui, la population juive marocaine ne compte plus que quelques milliers de

APERÇU DES CHAPITRES DE LA THÈSE

J'ai organisé la thèse en six chapitres, dont le premier, "Introduction" : La poétique de la différence" et le chapitre six, "Conclusion : Le chemin du safran".

Chapitre deux, "Affinité et différenciation : Le rôle de la langue dans la négociation de l'identité", poursuit le matériel d'introduction en discutant de l'utilisation de la langue et en présentant mes sites de terrain et mes interlocuteurs. Dans ce chapitre, je soutiens que le choix et l'utilisation de la langue, en particulier par les villageois juifs, ont joué un rôle important - que ce soit consciemment ou non - dans le processus continu de traçage et d'effacement des frontières identitaires, c'est-à-dire dans la négociation de l'affinité et de la différenciation, avec leurs voisins musulmans des villages des montagnes de l'Atlas. Plus précisément, le berbère a fonctionné comme la langue d'affinité entre les juifs et les musulmans, l'arabe comme la langue de différenciation. Les Juifs étaient généralement bilingues en berbère et en arabe marocain, souvent plus que leurs co-voyageurs musulmans parlant principalement le berbère. Et, curieusement, d'après les témoignages oraux et les quelques comptes-rendus écrits existants, il semble que la majorité des Juifs de l'Atlas parlaient l'arabe marocain comme langue maternelle au sein de l'environnement musulman berbérophone plus large, au moins depuis le début du XXe siècle. Après avoir brièvement décrit les principales théories des quelques experts en la matière, je me concentre, comme l'ont fait mes interlocuteurs juifs, sur la fonction de l'arabe comme outil de différenciation par rapport à leurs voisins non juifs (c'est-à-dire musulmans). Ensuite, je recadre la question en demandant pourquoi les Juifs ont maintenu des traditions orales en berbère, bien que l'arabe soit leur première langue. En effet, que les Juifs de l'Atlas parlent ou non le berbère comme langue maternelle, ils participent activement et régulièrement aux traditions culturelles berbères, tant entre eux qu'avec leurs voisins musulmans. Les traditions culturelles berbères étaient - et continuent d'être en mémoire - un site important d'affinité culturelle entre les Juifs et les musulmans.

Dans le chapitre trois, "La chanson d'Izza et la réplique de Hanna : expression créative partagée et coproduction de la différence", je continue à explorer la participation juive aux traditions culturelles berbères, tant sur le plan théorique que sur le plan littéral. J'utilise les chansons de deux femmes juives comme catalyseurs pour étudier les diverses facettes de l'affiliation et de la différenciation dans les formes et les espaces culturels partagés par les Juifs et les musulmans dans la vie des villages des montagnes de l'Atlas. Par souci de clarté, j'appelle les "chansons" "la chanson d'Izza" et "la chanson de Hanna", d'après les deux femmes qui les ont chantées, la première pour moi en Israël, et la seconde dans une anecdote qui m'a été racontée par un musulman au Maroc. Ce chapitre explore le phénomène des femmes qui franchissent les frontières, que ce soit physiquement ou symboliquement. Les deux chansons sont des représentations poétiques des tensions aux frontières, qu'il s'agisse des frontières du genre, de la religion ou de la géographie. Izza franchit dans sa chanson des frontières symboliques qu'elle ne pourrait pas franchir autrement en raison des tabous sociaux, car la chanson a des implications

Dans le chapitre quatre, "La poétique des insultes et du badinage : Travail et rencontres quotidiennes", j'étudie les nuances de l'usage des insultes dans les interactions informelles et quotidiennes entre les juifs et les musulmans des montagnes de l'Atlas, ainsi que leur usage dans les réminiscences de ces relations un demi-siècle plus tard. Les exemples particuliers abordés dans ce chapitre reflètent l'interdépendance sociale et économique entre les juifs et les musulmans, ouvrant une fenêtre sur leurs interactions quotidiennes. Parmi les expressions verbales examinées dans ma thèse, les insultes sont peut-être les plus susceptibles d'être mal comprises par des personnes extérieures qui ne connaissent ni les signaux culturels implicites - y compris un sens de l'humour dans lequel l'ironie et le sarcasme sont appréciés - ni la nature de ces relations particulières. Les insultes sont souvent sorties de leur contexte et simplifiées à l'extrême pour témoigner d'une hostilité bien ancrée. En effet, les insultes sont souvent vues à tort à travers l'écran des conflits contemporains et de la bifurcation des identités (Juif contre Musulman/Arabe). Pourtant, dans l'espace discursif qui existait autrefois entre juifs et musulmans dans les villages des montagnes de l'Atlas, les insultes représentaient les extrêmes du spectre émotionnel, du dédain et de l'antagonisme à l'affection et à l'intimité, souvent en même temps.

La première anecdote du chapitre cinq, "Rire ambivalent" : Limites religieuses franchies, supprimées ou contournées", traite des limites franchies, au sens propre et au sens figuré. À première vue, cette anecdote confirme les hypothèses dominantes sur les relations entre Juifs et Musulmans et entre minorités et majorités, qui les réduisent à une domination musulmane sur une minorité juive vulnérable. Mais lorsqu'on l'examine de plus près dans divers contextes, une image plus complexe apparaît, remettant en question ces hypothèses. Le chapitre poursuit ensuite l'étude des raisons pour lesquelles les frontières n'ont pas toujours correspondu de manière nette ou prévisible aux catégories religieuses, et la stratification sociopolitique complexe ne s'est pas non plus inscrite dans un binaire majorité-minorité simplifié. Les anecdotes de ce chapitre donnent un aperçu - comme s'en souviennent les musulmans - de la façon dont les Juifs vivaient en tant que seule minorité religieuse dans la culture des villages berbères qui était également une majorité musulmane, en particulier à des moments où les frontières de la culture et de la religion locales se confondaient. Ces frontières n'étaient ni statiques ni tangibles, mais pouvaient être franchies ou négociées. Ce chapitre explore également l'intertextualité et l'ambivalence dans les affirmations de

CHAPITRE DEUX

Affinité et différenciation :
Le rôle de la langue dans la négociation de l'identité

Homme musulman : "Les juifs ont parlé comme nous."
Un homme juif : "Le berbère était la langue des gentils."

INTRODUCTION

Dans ce chapitre, je soutiens que le choix et l'utilisation de la langue ont joué un rôle important dans la manière dont les Juifs et les musulmans des villages des montagnes de l'Atlas ont négocié l'affinité et la différenciation, c'est-à-dire dans la création d'identités à la fois communes et séparées. En particulier, j'examine comment les villageois juifs, qui étaient généralement bilingues en berbère[1] et en arabe marocain[2] , ont utilisé la langue comme un outil - délibérément ou non - dans le processus continu de traçage et d'effacement des frontières identitaires avec leurs co-villageois musulmans, principalement berbérophones. Plus précisément, le berbère semblait avoir fonctionné comme la langue d'affinité avec leurs voisins musulmans, l'arabe comme la langue de différenciation. Bien qu'il y ait eu des cas de juifs monolingues en berbère, des sources orales et écrites suggèrent que la majorité des juifs parlaient l'arabe marocain comme langue principale au sein de l'environnement berbérophone plus large, au moins depuis le début du XXe siècle. Les quelques experts en la matière ont proposé des raisons convaincantes, mais non concluantes, pour expliquer ce phénomène. Après avoir brièvement décrit ces propositions, je me concentre, comme mes interlocuteurs juifs, sur l'idée que l'utilisation de l'arabe par les Juifs était un outil pour se différencier de leurs voisins non juifs (c'est-à-dire musulmans) et pour préserver une identité communautaire distincte dans les villages très unis des montagnes de l'Atlas. Enfin, je recadre la question en demandant pourquoi les Juifs ont maintenu des traditions orales en berbère, bien que l'arabe soit leur langue maternelle.

D'une part, le berbère servait pour les Juifs à la fois d'expression de la communauté avec leurs voisins musulmans parlant principalement le berbère lors d'occasions sociales ou culturelles, et de nécessité de travail (en particulier pour les hommes juifs) dans l'économie locale interdépendante. D'autre part, comme le maintien de la différence et des frontières était important pour l'identité religieuse de chaque groupe, et en particulier pour les Juifs en tant que groupe religieux minoritaire, de nombreux Juifs des montagnes de l'Atlas utilisaient l'arabe marocain pour se distinguer de leur environnement musulman immédiat - qui était principalement berbérophone - et pour se connecter avec le monde juif marocain plus large (qui, jusqu'au milieu du XXe siècle, était principalement arabophone). Cependant, que les Juifs parlent ou non le berbère comme

1 Comme indiqué au chapitre 1 (15n30), j'utilise le mot "berbère" comme le mot le plus familier en anglais pour la langue tamazight, et "Tashelhit" pour désigner un terme spécifique dans ce dialecte.

2 Les hommes juifs sont en fait trilingues, car ils ont été formés dès l'enfance à la lecture de l'hébreu, la langue de la prière, les textes sacrés et l'érudition.

(qui sont attachés aux rites religieux juifs - en plus des traditions orales), à la fois entre eux et avec leurs voisins musulmans dans les montagnes de l'Atlas.

MÉTHODES DE TERRAIN

Utilisation et abus de ma propre langue

Comme j'ai choisi de me concentrer sur les traditions orales partagées entre musulmans et juifs dans des régions à prédominance berbère, la majorité des exemples (blagues, anecdotes, chansons) qui sont présentés dans ce mémoire ont été relatés en berbère par mes interlocuteurs musulmans et juifs - quelle que soit leur langue maternelle - comme ils l'avaient été dans le passé. C'est-à-dire que j'ai estimé qu'il était important d'enregistrer les éléments du folklore dans la langue originale dans laquelle le narrateur les avait entendus, et je leur ai donc demandé de les raconter dans cette langue, qui était généralement le berbère. Cependant, en raison de mon manque de maîtrise du berbère, j'ai fait appel à des assistants de recherche, à la fois sur place au Maroc et tout au long du processus de rédaction, pour m'aider dans les traductions ; la plupart des traductions des éléments analysés sont le résultat d'un effort collectif. Au Maroc, mes entretiens ont été réalisés principalement en berbère avec l'aide d'assistants de recherche. Les interlocuteurs masculins, s'ils se sentaient à l'aise en arabe marocain, se tournaient parfois vers cette langue à mon avantage, mais la majorité de mes enregistrements du Maroc sont en berbère. En Israël, j'ai réalisé les entretiens principalement en hébreu, car ma formation en arabe marocain urbain contemporain était insuffisante, étant donné la variété des dialectes judéo-marocains de montagne. J'ai traduit la majorité des conversations en hébreu présentées ici, avec l'aide occasionnelle de collègues de Berkeley.

Interlocuteurs et assistants de recherche/interprètes

Si les communautés étudiées étaient assez petites, je pense qu'elles étaient représentatives des nombreuses communautés de ce type dans le Haut-Atlas du sud-ouest et l'Anti-Atlas du nord (deux régions de langue tashelhit, voisines l'une de l'autre), tant par leur diversité que par leur certaine cohérence. J'ai délibérément choisi des sites au Maroc et en Israël où mes interlocuteurs musulmans et juifs étaient originaires des mêmes villages ou régions générales ; c'est-à-dire qu'après avoir effectué un premier travail de terrain à Tifnout, au Maroc, j'ai recherché en Israël des juifs ayant immigré des villages de Tifnouti. (Toutefois, mes interlocuteurs en Israël étaient généralement dispersés dans tout le pays, plutôt que regroupés comme ils l'avaient été au Maroc). Cette correspondance géographique m'a semblé importante étant donné le fort sentiment d'identité lié à leur village natal exprimé par les Juifs qui avaient immigré en Israël. [3]

Mes sources primaires ont été tirées de près d'une centaine de conversations. La majorité de mes interlocuteurs étaient âgés de soixante ans ou plus, car j'étais surtout intéressé par les interviews de personnes ayant des souvenirs personnels de la vie interreligieuse du village (que ce soit en tant qu'enfants ou en tant qu'adultes). Cependant, j'ai également enregistré des interlocuteurs trop jeunes pour avoir fait l'expérience de la coexistence entre juifs et musulmans dans les montagnes de l'Atlas eux-mêmes, mais à qui des histoires, des chansons ou des blagues avaient été

[3]J'ai également effectué des travaux de terrain dans plusieurs autres sites au Maroc (Tinghir, Taznakht, Amizmiz, Tahala) et auprès d'émigrants originaires de ces régions en Israël, mais la plupart de ce matériel est

une remarquable cohérence des attitudes. Mes interlocuteurs étaient certainement autosélectifs, ce qui m'a empêché d'avoir des interlocuteurs qui auraient été hostiles à mon projet ; en effet, certains ont choisi de ne pas me parler. Je n'ai pas caché ma judaïcité au Maroc, et je sais que certains chercheurs en histoire juive ont rencontré une certaine résistance, peur, voire hostilité (voir, par exemple, Boum 2007, sur les soupçons de musulmans trop jeunes pour avoir connu des juifs dans leur région pour savoir pourquoi lui, un musulman, ferait des recherches sur l'histoire juive ; et Kartowski-Aiach 2013, sur les villageois plus âgés qui avaient peur de parler des juifs devant les jeunes générations). Mais, en fait, j'ai connu plus de refus directs en Israël qu'au Maroc. Je suis certain que mon accès au Maroc a été facilité par le fait que mes assistants de recherche étaient généralement locaux et socialement sensibles. Pour la plupart, je n'ai pas sélectionné d'interlocuteurs connus comme conteurs, poètes ou chanteurs. Cependant, la mesure dans laquelle les traditions orales ont coloré les souvenirs est une indication que la pratique de la poétique semble avoir fait partie intégrante de la vie quotidienne, accessible à tous. Ce que l'anthropologue Lila Abu-Lughod écrit sur "la part essentielle que la littérature orale a jouée" dans la vie quotidienne des Bédouins (Abu-Lughod 1986:27) trouve un écho dans mes travaux de terrain : "Comme la plupart des poèmes que j'ai recueillis ont été spontanément récités dans des contextes sociaux spécifiques, je ne pouvais que les reconnaître comme une forme de discours bien intégrée dans la vie sociale des

L'ENVIRONNEMENT LINGUISTIQUE COMPLEXE DU MAROC

Avant de commencer notre enquête sur l'utilisation de la langue par les Juifs de l'Atlas, il est nécessaire d'avoir un aperçu général de la diversité linguistique et du multilinguisme au Maroc. "Il ne fait aucun doute que **la question linguistique est fondamentale** au Maroc. On ne peut rien comprendre à ce pays compliqué si on ne comprend pas cette question, au moins dans ses grandes lignes" (Laroui 2011:10, son accent, ma traduction). Étant donné l'environnement linguistique complexe et dynamique du Maroc, mes suppositions concernant l'usage de la langue par les Juifs doivent être considérées, même si c'est brièvement, dans le contexte des environnements sociopolitiques et culturels plus larges du milieu du XXe siècle, la période des réminiscences. Cependant, j'utiliserai le présent pour écrire des circonstances linguistiques qui sont restées relativement similaires à celles d'aujourd'hui.

L'arabe marocain et le berbère (tamazight) sont les deux principales langues parlées au Maroc. L'arabe marocain est principalement parlé dans les villes et les zones côtières, tandis que le berbère est principalement parlé dans les montagnes de l'Atlas et du Rif. [4] L'arabe marocain et le berbère sont tous deux des langues essentiellement orales. [5] L'arabe standard et le français (même après l'indépendance du Maroc) sont les langues associées à l'alphabétisation et à l'éducation. Pendant la période du protectorat français (1912-1956), l'arabe standard (qui est significativement

4Voir le chapitre 1 (15n30) pour une description des différents dialectes et termes.

5Tifinagh, une ancienne écriture berbère, a été adaptée et adoptée pour l'enseignement dans les écoles marocaines en 2003, bien que dans une mesure limitée et avec un succès mitigé. L'arabe marocain est également utilisé dans une certaine mesure dans la littérature moderne, en particulier pour les dialogues.

6 C'est le cas de nombreux pays arabophones, mais l'arabe marocain (MA) diffère le plus de l'arabe standard (SA). L'arabe standard est basé sur l'arabe classique (CA) du Coran, dont il a été modernisé, et qui a eu une tradition religieuse et littéraire continue. Comme son nom l'indique, il est standardisé

Le français était la langue officielle des institutions marocaines et continue à avoir un capital social, économique et politique plus élevé que l'arabe ou le berbère marocains[7], bien que personne ne parle (ou ne parle) l'arabe standard comme langue maternelle. La langue française avait peu progressé dans les régions où j'ai travaillé sur le terrain à l'époque de leurs souvenirs. [8]

Éducation

Bien qu'il y ait eu très peu d'écoles laïques avant l'indépendance du Maroc dans les montagnes de l'Atlas[9] , tant les musulmans que les juifs ont souligné l'importance de l'éducation religieuse, en particulier pour les garçons. Les écoles religieuses musulmanes rurales étaient appelées d'après le terme de mosquée, *timzgida* en berbère (de *masjid en* arabe), où les cours avaient lieu. Ces écoles, où les élèves allaient pendant deux à trois ans (Boum 2006:405), "enseignaient l'alphabet arabe et certains versets du Coran aux garçons qui avaient acquis des rudiments d'alphabétisation tue (Spratt et al 1991 ; Wagner 1993)" (Hoffman 2008:21). Les cours de religion pour les garçons juifs se tenaient dans le *sla*, terme judéo-arabe (de l'arabe pour "prière") pour la synagogue, où les cours avaient lieu. Les garçons juifs ont continué à étudier jusqu'à l'âge de treize ans (leur Bar Mitzvah), même si ce n'était qu'à temps partiel, car, comme les garçons musulmans, ils ont souvent commencé à travailler très tôt. Tant pour les Juifs que pour les musulmans, les formes d'enseignement supérieur étaient réservées à un petit nombre de personnes, et étaient le plus souvent suivies dans la ville de Marrakech, dans le sud du pays. Les filles n'ont pas été scolarisées avant l'ouverture des écoles de l'Alliance israélite pour les filles juives et après l'indépendance du Maroc pour les filles musulmanes.

Comme pour les juifs religieux du monde entier, l'alphabétisation en hébreu était nécessaire pour les hommes juifs dans l'accomplissement des prières quotidiennes ainsi que des bénédictions et des prières pour diverses occasions, et surtout pour la lecture de la Torah et du Talmud (Harshav 1990:12). L'utilisation de l'hébreu était donc presque exclusivement liturgique et savante au Maroc, comme elle l'avait été pour les Juifs presque partout avant les débuts du mouvement sioniste à la fin du XIXe siècle avec la renaissance de l'hébreu comme langue parlée en Palestine. Alors qu'en général, la connaissance de l'hébreu était quelque peu rudimentaire, les érudits des grandes communautés comme Ighil n'Ogho avaient une connaissance plus approfondie. L'usage populaire de l'hébreu dans l'Atlas comprenait des amulettes et un répertoire de musique et de poésie, comme

dans l'ensemble du monde arabophone, et sert de langue officielle des institutions et des médias, ainsi que des systèmes administratifs et juridiques.

[7] Voir par exemple, Sadiqi (2003 : Ch 1) et Hoffman (2008:17).

[8] Le français avait été introduit dans certaines communautés juives rurales par les écoles de l'Alliance israélite universelle. L'Alliance, une organisation juive basée à Paris et créée en 1860, avait pour but d'améliorer les conditions politiques, sociales, économiques et culturelles des Juifs, en particulier dans le bassin méditerranéen, principalement par le biais d'écoles qui encourageaient un enseignement français laïque. Toutefois, ce n'est qu'après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, lorsque les autorités françaises ont étendu leur contrôle sur les flancs sud de l'Atlas et les oasis sahariennes, que l'Alliance a commencé à ouvrir des écoles dans ces régions. Mes interlocuteurs parlaient peu ou pas du tout le français (à l'exception de quelques uns qui étaient restés au Maroc, s'installant à Casablanca) ; pour les Juifs, cela était dû au fait que la seule école des régions où j'ai effectué un travail de terrain, Ighil n'Ogho, a ouvert en 1955, quelques années seulement avant le début de la migration juive de cette région ; pour les musulmans, les écoles enseignant le français dans ces régions ont ouvert à une date encore plus tardive.

Une petite partie du nord du Maroc était sous domination espagnole pendant la même période que le reste du pays était sous domination française (1912-1956), mais les Juifs parlaient une version d'un espagnol de la fin du Moyen Âge (Heath

[9] The French colonial administration had a network of schools, but they were sparse throughout the Atlas Mountains.

Judeo-Berber and Judeo-Moroccan Arabic had an admixture of words of Hebrew or Aramaic origins, given the ongoing use of Hebrew and Aramaic in prayer and religious study (Chetrit 2007 and Lowenstein 2000:51).[10]

However, the use of Hebrew characters went beyond the religious associations of Hebrew; Jewish men wrote Judeo-Arabic using Hebrew characters for a variety of purposes.[11] "Judeo-Arabic" is primarily an academic term, used to describe the Arabic vernaculars Jews speak and have spoken throughout the centuries and throughout the Arabic-speaking world.[12] Moroccan Jews themselves generally do not use the term "Judeo-Arabic," but usually just "Arabic," or sometimes, *"il-Arabia dialna"* (our Arabic) or "the Arabic of Jews," as one of my interlocutors clarified for me when speaking in Hebrew.

Language and Identity

In Morocco, language use and identity are closely intertwined, yet this relationship is complicated by a variety of factors. Arab and Berber, as ethnic categories, are neither stable nor static, but rather negotiable and mutable,[13] and can be emotionally and/or politically charged.[14] As Deborah Kapchan so beautifully sums up one of linguist Fatima Sadiqi's assertions in *Women, Gender and Language in Morocco* (2003), "All people have multiple identities...and call strategically upon one or another to accrue value" (2006:129). These identities are perhaps most clearly constructed as linguistic categories (Rosen 1984:26), for in Morocco, identity is rooted in language.[15] Or is it? Although the majority of Moroccans are actually "Arabic-speakers of Berber origins" (Waterbury 1972:xii)—people of Berber ancestry make up 60 percent of Morocco's population, according to some studies—typically only people who speak Berber as their mother tongue are considered, or consider themselves to be, "Berber." Moves to urban or other Arabic-speaking population centers have diminished the numbers of Berber speakers, even

[10] The Alliance schools also included courses in modern Hebrew, as well as in Standard Arabic that was usually taught by a local Muslim. Some Muslim students also attended the Alliance schools, typically the children of local authorities and/or wealthier villagers. One of my Muslim interlocutors in Ighil n'Ogho recounted wanting to attend with her Jewish girlfriends, but claimed she was too shy in the end.

[11] Writing vernacular or local languages in Hebrew script was characteristic of Jews throughout their diaspora. Some Jewish men, especially local leaders, were also literate in Standard Arabic.

[12] On the politics and problematics of the misuse of the term "Judeo-Arabic," see Shohat (2016) and Hary (1992:7375, 2016). The term also tends to be used mistakenly by scholars and lay people alike as if it refers to a single language, despite the fact that it refers to a great variety of forms across geography and centuries. Even Judeo- Arabic in Morocco varied widely geographically (Heath 2002, Chetrit 2007). However, despite definite exceptions, especially in the some of the Judeo-Arabic spoken in the mountain communities, it was for the most part mutually intelligible with the more widely spoken Moroccan Arabic—which itself has regional variations—as spoken by Muslims (not as different as Yiddish from German, for example). Because of this and for the sake of simplicity, I will mostly just use "Arabic," except for more specifically religious uses. And all my uses of Judeo-Arabic refer to Judeo-Moroccan Arabic.

"Judeo-+Language Name" is the formation used to indicate a "Jewish language," which Joseph Chetrit defines in part as having a wider use in Jewish religious practices, including written texts (written in Hebrew characters), and used globally, not merely locally ("vehicular" rather than "vernacular") (2007: 8-9; 234-35, 291, 324-26).

[13] Ethnic categories themselves are, of course, amorphous and changeable. See, for example, Wimmer (2008).

[14] See Hoffman (2008:16) for a discussion of problematics of these specific categories in Morocco.

[15] "Arab" means, in its most general sense throughout the Middle East and North Africa, a speaker of Arabic. Arab as an ethnic/national identity in the Middle East dates only from the late nineteenth century. Moroccan nationalists who identified with pan-Arab or pan-Islamic movements adopted the usage and began to identify Morocco as Arab.

if their heritage is Berber (in addition to intermarriage) (Hoffman 2008).[16] Today, speakers of Berber (whether it is their first language or not) are estimated to make up around 50 percent of the Moroccan population (Sadiqi 2003:46). Because there are no official statistics (Hoffman 2008:15),[17] it is difficult to estimate numbers for the 1940s-1950s, that is, the period referenced in my interlocutors' reminiscences.

As already noted, ethnic categories such as Berber or Arabic are amorphous, but that has not stopped scholars from putting forth various theories—with contradictory conclusions—as to whether or not the Jews of these regions could be considered ethnically Berber.[18] As mentioned in Chapter One, it is unknown to what extent Berbers converted to Judaism before the arrival of Islam, or whether a significant number of Jews were "Berberized" before the Arab-Islamic conquest. What is clear is that both Jews and Muslims of the Moroccan Atlas Mountains shared a common geographic heritage for centuries, if not longer, facing the same harsh extremes of climate, the same droughts, famines, and tribal wars, in addition to sharing cultural traditions and incorporating each other's customs. "Local identity is created in connection with the place and the activity, using both local traditions and social life as well as the material potential of the landscape" (Frykman 2003:176). Considering this question of identity further, I follow Nestor García Canclini's suggestion that studying cultural processes is more productive than studying rigid notions of identity: "It is not possible to speak of identities as if they were simply a matter of a set of fixed characteristics, or to posit them as the essence of an ethnicity or a nation" (1995:xxviii). The relationships between identities such as Berber and Jewish can be seen not as oppositional, but rather as complementary; that is, for example, one does not have to be Jewish *or* Berber, but can be Jewish *and* Berber (not unlike Berber Muslims). Therefore, I use the term "Berber Jew"[19] as a cultural identification for Jewish natives of predominantly Berber-speaking regions to distinguish them from Moroccan Jews of the coast and cities. I have also chosen to use the term "Atlas Jew" interchangeably with Berber Jew, because it circumvents the complexities of ethnic identifications by using a geographic marker.[20]

Self-identification of Jews as Berbers (both in Morocco and in Israel) was somewhat rare (among those I interviewed, but also according to other scholars in the field), but also depended upon context, language, social class, and generation of interlocutor. For example, many interlocutors residing today in Israel conveyed a sense of having been "Jews among Berbers" in Morocco, and "Berbers among Jews" in Israel. That is, self-labeling seemed often to be a

[16] As Deborah Kapchan observes: "Only Berbers know Berber—Arabs have no reason to acquire it" (Kapchan 1996:102:fn21).

[17] Moroccan government policy discouraged the formal identification of its citizens as "Arab" or "Berber," in part in response to the French colonial administrations efforts to divide the Moroccan people along those lines.

[18] For a thorough discussion of these theories, and the possible ideological overtones involved, see Schroeter 2007.

[19] I use "Berber Jew " and "Berber Muslim" rather than "Jewish Berber" or "Muslim Berber" to convey the sense that Jews and Muslims share the cultural identification, differentiated by religion. This order also emphasizes "Jew" and "Muslim" as religious terms, rather than ethnic, as they are sometimes used. As Gil Anidjar describes such a distinction in an interview about his book, *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy:* " 'Jew' is primarily, even if not exclusively, a religious term. It is referring to a religious community, a community that may be ethnic, but that fundamentally has a religious commitment" (Shaikh 2003).

[20] This term is also not precise, given that not all Berber-speaking regions are literally in the mountains; some are in the plains and valleys, as well as pre-Saharan desert regions. For clarity's sake, I consider the plains and valleys connected to the Atlas Mountains as all part of the general Atlas Mountain region (and I did not carry out fieldwork in the pre-Saharan desert regions, although there is also overlap between those and the Atlas).

response to one's environment (that is, the point of reference for one's sense of "otherness"). "Ethnic categories may shift contextually.. .there might be substantial disagreement among individuals over which ones are the most appropriate and relevant ethnic labels" (Wimmer 2008).

LINGUISTIC PRACTICES OF ATLAS MOUNTAIN JEWS

As mentioned in Chapter One, Jews made up several linguistic communities in Morocco. In addition to Arabic and Berber-speaking Jewish communities, the expulsion of Jews from Spain in the late fifteenth century led to Judeo-Spanish-speaking Jewish populations in Morocco, primarily in the northern regions and in urban and coastal areas. The Spanish Protectorate in Morocco's northern zones from 1912 to 1956 accelerated the use of modern Spanish for Jews and Muslims. French was first introduced to Jews at first with the opening of Alliance Israelite Universelle schools, starting in Tangier in 1862, and its usage accelerated with the advent of the French Protectorate, established in 1912, together with the expansion of the Alliance schools throughout Morocco.

The two principal regions of my fieldwork in Morocco, the Tifnout River valley of the High Atlas Mountains and the region of Taliouine in the Zagmouzen valley of the Anti-Atlas Mountains—represent the two main types of Jewish linguistic communities in the Atlas Mountains (the Berber dialect spoken in both these regions is Tashelhit): Tifnout is one of the few places where Jews spoke Berber as their primary language—and for many it was their only spoken language—until their departure in the early 1950s,[21] whereas in Taliouine, while Jewish men and women were conversant in Berber, the home language was typically Judeo-Moroccan Arabic. There were a dozen or so Jewish communities in each of these regions, living in the largely Muslim villages.

The Jews of these two regions represented the first two of the three types of Atlas Jewish communities described by Joseph Chetrit[22] (2007:227-235) with regard to their linguistic practices in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: 1) monolingual Berber-speaking communities; 2) bilingual in Berber and Arabic (and likely monolingual in Berber in previous centuries); 3) monolingual in Judeo-Arabic. The second type, which applies to Taliouine, was the most common, at least in recent history, of the three (according to oral testimonies and to limited documentation): that is, bilingual but speaking mostly Arabic among themselves within the larger Berber-speaking environment. The degree to which Berber was spoken primarily at home or for work, and whether more typically by men or by women, varied from village to village (and sometimes even from family to family), and was perhaps determined in part by the size of the

[21] In addition to my interlocutors' testimonies, Tifnout's Jewish communities are mentioned as monolingual in Berber in Chetrit (2007:73, 231-3), Goldberg (1983:63), and Zafrani (1990:194). There were also small monolingual Berber-speaking Jewish communities in various places throughout the Atlas Mountains. Chetrit found only one written document attesting to monolingual Berber-speaking Jewish communities, written in 1902 following a three year voyage throughout the Atlas by a rabbi, native of the northeastern Atlas.

[22] Joseph Chetrit, whose scholarship I refer to heavily throughout this chapter was born in the southern Morocco town of Tarudant (itself a mix of Arabic and Berber speakers). He is Professor Emeritus of Linguistics and SocioPragmatics at the University of Haifa, Israel, where he was also Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Vice-Rector. He is a leading scholar on the language, literature, culture, and music of Moroccan Jews. His broad scholarship is based on both oral and written texts in Judeo-Arabic, Judeo-Berber, French, and Hebrew.

Jewish community. For example, the Tifnout Jewish communities were very small, some consisting of fewer than ten families. The testimonies reveal little consistency in gender patterns among Jews as to who spoke more Berber or more Arabic. For example, in Tifnout, some Jewish men began learning Arabic, particularly through the synagogue (more later), but it seems women did not. In areas where Arabic was more dominant among Jews, men were sometimes more competent in Berber due to work associations with Muslim men. In others, women were more competent, due to friendships with Muslim women and sharing tasks such as watching each other's children and gathering firewood, all of which were accompanied by songs (in Berber!).

Although no documentation exists, it is likely that Jews speaking Berber as their first language was widespread historically, and that they adopted Arabic over time. Several of my interlocutors attested that members of their older generations were monolingual in Berber.[23] Harvey Goldberg also heard this from his interlocutors: "A relatively young man from Imini recalls that the rabbi in the community would explain the laws of each holiday in the synagogue, first in Arabic and then in *shilha*[24] [Judeo-Arabic term for Berber], 'for the old people' " (Goldberg 1983:63). Chetrit suggests that the development of roads by the French, leading to more contact between the various Jewish communities, contributed to the shift to Arabic: "Even the few small and isolated communities of the Atlas Mountains, where only Berber...was spoken [by Jews] until the beginning of the twentieth century, turned to Judeo-Arabic thanks to the new roads built by the colonial authorities, and then became bilingual" (Chetrit 2014:203). Chetrit also proposes that the abundant vocabulary of Berber, or Judeo-Berber,[25] in Judeo-Arabic reflects a long history of Jews speaking Berber (even if bilingually, that is, not necessarily as their first language), and not just borrowings of Berber terms into Arabic (Chetrit 2007: 225-26; 235-67; 325).

Determining linguistic practices of Jews from the Atlas is further complicated by the stereotypes of backwardness and stupidity attached to "Berberness," particularly by other Jews (both in Morocco and Israel; more later). When asked if they had been Berber-speaking when living in the rural villages, Jewish interlocutors (whether now residing in Moroccan cities or in Israel) often claimed that Jews in their own community had not, but that those further up the mountains or in more remote villages had.[26] One interlocutor followed his assertion by singing me a song in Berber to demonstrate how "those" Jews sang.

[23] De Foucauld, for example, writing in the late nineteenth century also mentions several monolingual Jewish communities ([1888]1934:214, region of Taznakht, for example).

[24] *Shilha,* the Judeo-Arabic term used for the Berber language, seems to come from "Tashelhit," the name of dialect of the southwestern Atlas and Anti-Atlas Mountains, even though the terms is used for both Tashelhit and Tamazight dialects.

[25] Chetrit calls "Judeo-Berber" only a "partial" Jewish language. (2007: 8-9; 234-35, 291, 324-26). Therefore, for simplicity's sake, I generally use only "Berber," rather than "Judeo-Berber."

According to Joseph Chetrit's extensive research of documents, no Jewish written texts in Judeo-Berber (2007:213) have been found. "I tried also to find traces of translation, readings, or study of the Torah in Judeo- Berber, as is the case for all Jewish languages" (Chetrit 2007:233-4, my translation). Chetrit has shown that the much touted *"Haggadah de Pesah"* (Passover text used for the ritual *Seder* meal), written in Berber in Hebrew characters (published in Galand & Zafrani 1970), was "produced on command," as with two other such texts by an individual responding to an outsider's request, and therefore not evidence of a larger Judeo-Berber written corpus (Chetrit 2007: 220-25; 292).

[26] This is a common refrain noted by other scholars. See, for example, Goldberg (1983:63).

For many of my Atlas Mountain interlocutors, the connotation of backwardness and naïveté was, and continues to be, invoked with humor and affection, and even with the ability to laugh at themselves. In fact, many jokes that play on this idea of backwardness, as well as on the supposed ignorance or lenience of religious practice, circulated among rural Jews themselves about Jews supposedly more "Berberized" than themselves.[27] For example, one of my interlocutors who had moved from the Atlas to Casablanca told me the following joke:

> One year at Sukkoth,[28] they had their one *etrog*[29] for performing the prayers.
> A little lamb came along and ate it.[30] What could they do? They couldn't get another one in time for the holiday. So they held the lamb up, shook her along with the *lulav*[3] and said the prayers.
> She (the lamb-etrog) said "Baaaa, baaaaa, baaaaa," and the congregation said, "Aaaaamen."

This is similar to another joke I discovered in the Israel Folktale Archives,[32] recorded by one of my interlocutor's, Haim,[33] from Tifnout, where the Jewish community was largely monolingual in Berber:

> Once they were short a *minyan*[34] in the hamlet; someone was traveling again, so only nine men remained. Out of utter foolishness, one said, "Let's bring a goat. We'll tie him to the synagogue and every time we come to the points in the Kaddish[35] when we answer "Amen," [which occurs several times in the short prayer] we'll pull on the goat's tail and he'll answer "Maa," that is, "Amen." And that's how we'll have a minyan![36]

[27] Chetrit also recorded many "parodic or even satiric texts" (Chetrit 2007:235, my translation) that "circulated orally in bilingual communities and played on the derision of the lack of Jewish culture, the extreme ignorance, and the uncivilized manners of the Judeo-Berberophones" (Chetrit 2007:268, my translation). That is, these texts circulated in Berber, so were for the amusement only of those Jews who understood Berber.

[28] Sukkoth, which comes in the fall, is both a harvest holiday, and commemorates the forty-year period during which Jews were wandering in the desert between having escaped from slavery in Egypt and arriving in the "promised land" (as described in the Hebrew Bible). During this period they lived in "booths" *(Sukkoth* in Hebrew), that is, temporary shelters.

[29] The *etrog,* or citron in English, is the special citrus fruit used symbolically in the Jewish holiday of Sukkoth.

[30] The fact that the slightest defect renders the *etrog* unfit for ritual use adds to the humor of the anecdote.

[31] The *lulav* is a palm branch, bound with myrtle and willow sprigs. The shaking, or waving, of these together with the *etrog* is one of the daily rituals of the weeklong holiday.

[32] Now housed at the University of Haifa, Israel, the Israel Folktale Archives (IFA) was established by Dov Noy in 1955. During IFA's early decades, hundreds of volunteers were enlisted to collect tales from Israel's different ethnic communities, though the vast majority were collected as translations into Hebrew, rather than in the narrator's native language.

[33] I use pseudonyms for my narrators to protect their privacy, and for the same reason have changed the names of smaller villages.

[34] A *minyan* is the quorum of ten adult men needed for certain daily prayers.

[35] One of the most important daily prayers that requires a *minyan.*

[36] This is my translation from the Hebrew tale #9573. Almost all recordings for the archive were done in Hebrew, rather than in the original language of the tales, and/or native language of the speaker.

Goats and lambs appear in Jewish folklore throughout the world, perhaps dating back to the Hebrew Bible and to their roles as sacrificial animals.[37] Atlas Jews also applied these same stereotypes of backwardness and also gullibility to their Muslim neighbors, which we shall see in some of samples of oral traditions discussed in this dissertation.

DIFFERENTIATION: ARABIC-SPEAKING JEWS AMONG BERBERS

Given the close-knit village society of the Atlas, and the degree of social and economic interdependence between Jewish and Muslim villagers, language was an intriguing area of differentiation. Daily life offered frequent contacts between Muslims and Jews, perhaps even more so than in Morocco's towns and cities, due to the fact that Muslims and Jews frequently lived in closer proximity in rural regions. Throughout Morocco, Jews had often lived in their own quarter or neighborhood, called a *mellah,* after the first one was established in the city of Fez in the fifteenth century.[38] Although living in the earliest *mellah-s* was obligatory, the grouping of Jews allowed for the convenience of communal holiday celebration, and in particular the weekly Sabbath, so the separation was often mutually preferred by both Jews and Muslims. There was quite a bit of diversity in the Atlas; sometimes the *mellah* was set apart physically from the rest of the village, or the term *mellah* might refer to one street or a couple of alleyways that were not separated or distinguished in any way from the houses around them. In many Atlas villages there was no actual physical *mellah*, and Jews and Muslims lived side by side.

Depending on context, the *mellah* could denote either the physical space of Jews, or the community itself, as a more conceptual term (Schroeter 2008:155). So even where there was no distinct Jewish space, the term *mellah* was used. Today, the former Jewish quarter or neighborhood continues to be referred to as the *mellah* in the villages (and cities) where Jews once lived. In the villages, the homes are either now inhabited by Muslims or have fallen into ruin.

Whether a physical or conceptual separation, a rural *mellah* and the rest of the village were completely interdependent. Nor were all religious activities confined to the *mellah.* For example, the *mikvah,* or ritual bath, was often a simple structure built over a stream outside of the *mellah.* Muslim interlocutors described the Jewish processions involving singing and beating of hand drums to accompany the bride to the water preceding weddings. Non-verbal cultural traditions, particularly communal dances that took place in public squares, also played an important role in bringing Muslims and Jews together in village life. But my interlocutors' reminiscences offer glimpses of more intimate moments, despite the separation of living spaces. Jews and Muslims delighted in remembering certain foods that each group got from the other and which were permitted by their religion (they also delighted in telling when the other broke his or her own religion's rules). A Muslim interlocutor remembered Jewish women rushing to finish baking the Sabbath bread before sunset. A Jewish tailor from Tifnout remembered an awkward moment in the bedroom of the local Muslim ruler *(amghar),* where he had been fitting the wife for a dress

[37] For examples in Yiddish folktales (translated to English), see Olsvanger 1987. The following joke has echoes of our anecdote above: " 'Is the goat a rabbi?' 'No.' 'So why does he have a beard and bleat [i.e. make the plaintive sound of praying]?' "

[38] This term is specific to Morocco. For a history of the *mellah*, see Gottreich 2010. For a corrective of misconceptions about *mellahs* in Morocco and misleading comparisons to *ghettos* in Europe, see Gottreich 2007.

when the amghar walked in and teased him. (It was unthinkable for a Muslim man to be alone in the home of a Muslim woman he was not related to; however, Jewish men had special access and were not considered a threat to the family's honor; more on this to come in later chapters).

What historian Daniel Schroeter observes of Muslim-Jewish relations in cities also applies for Atlas Mountain villages: "Communal boundaries were constantly negotiated, transcended or transgressed in everyday life" (Schroeter 2016:48). Language choice was a tool that was used in both the creation and transcendence of such boundaries. The few specialists in the field (Chetrit 2007, anthropologist Harvey Goldberg 1983, scholar of Berber culture Abderrahmane Lakhsassi 2008, and historian Daniel Schroeter 2007) have persuasively discussed reasons why the majority of Jews living in Berber-speaking villages spoke Moroccan Arabic as their first language. However, given the limited documentation, the issue remains enigmatic. As these scholars suggest, Jews' adoption of Arabic may well have been a survival strategy, a means for the minority population to align themselves with the politically dominant Arabic-speakers. That is, language usage might have offered the minority group a way to take a superior stance toward their Berber-speaking Muslim neighbors, and thereby offset the socio-political hierarchy. As Abderrahmane Lakhsassi proposes:

> It is by utilitarian knowledge of, and in particular familiarity with, languages of prestige that minorities try to redress the adverse balance in the social sphere... Given the inferior place of the Jew in the tribal social hierarchy, the utilization of Arabic would have served the Jew in this case. to distinguish himself from the rest of his rural countrymen, and thus redress his social status among the Berber-speakers. (2008, my translation)

However, for Berber Muslims during the periods of my interlocutors' reminiscences, Moroccan Arabic was not perceived as signifying a higher social status. The stigma of Berber language and culture began with the Moroccan nationalist movement, accelerating postIndependence (1956) and continuing due to the increased Arabicization following mass urbanization (particularly in the 1970s and 1980s) (Hoffman 2008: Ch 1). Hoffman describes how the hierarchy shifted in post-Independence Morocco from that of pre-Independence in which "MA [Moroccan Arabic] and the Berber varieties were once hierarchically equal and inferior to CA [Classical Arabic] and, under the Protectorate, to French" (Hoffman 2008: Ch 1). But post-Independence, "Berber is considered by the dominant Arabic-speaking population as lacking in social capital and is strongly linked to rural areas, whereas Moroccan Arabic ... suggests piety, knowledge, worldliness" (Hoffman 2008:17). The Berbers of the regions of my fieldwork held complex, and even contradictory, views towards Arabic, as described by ethno- musicologist Philip Schuyler:

> The influence of Islam is manifest among the Ishlhin [Tashlhit-speaking Berbers], the influence of Arabic language and culture, markedly less so.
> The tribesmen could embrace the religion with an open heart, but they were loath to accept the authority and taxation of the central government.
> Whenever possible, the Ishlhin resisted the Sultan's armies, while recognizing the spiritual sovereignty of the Sultan himself. For its part, the central government was seldom able to push very far into the mountains,

> nor yet to maintain for long its power in conquered territories. As a result, contact between Arab and mountain Berbers was limited. The Arabic language never came to replace Berber in the highlands, as it had in the plains. (Schuyler 1979:69)

But among Jewish communities (during the period of reminiscences mid-twentieth century), Arabic was the more prestigious language, and the dominant language of the more hegemonic Jewish communities. This certainly contributed to the motivation for Atlas Jews to know Arabic, even if they did not speak it as their first language—for Atlas Jews were not isolated from the larger Arabic-speaking Moroccan Jewish community (as distinct from Berber Muslims, who did not have interconnected networks at the levels that Jews did). In this sense, Moroccan Arabic functioned as a lingua franca for Jews.[39] Interconnected networks — commercial, social, and religious—were fundamental for the minority Jewish villagers. Jews had greater contact with individuals and groups outside their village communities than did their Muslim neighbors, due to both Jewish and commercial networks. As traveling merchants in the Atlas, Jewish men benefitted from knowing Arabic, since their travels included Arabic-speaking areas or even cities, such as Marrakesh. Goldberg wrote of a Jewish interlocutor's description of traveling groups of both Muslim and Jewish merchants in which "the Muslim Berbers were partially dependent upon the Jews, in Marrakesh, to carry out trade in Arabic" (Goldberg 1983:63). Furthermore, Jewish men often served as translators throughout Morocco.[40] Thus, as Goldberg concluded, "Both on an instrumental basis (for the sake of trade), and on a prestige basis (the language of Jewish learning[41] and of urban civility), there were powerful motivations to orient the Jews toward Arabic speech rather than Berber speech" (Goldberg 1983:63).

While the previously described motivations are all convincing, my Jewish interlocutors focused particularly on the—seemingly paradoxical — function of using Arabic as a means of distinguishing themselves from the non-Jewish majority among whom they lived. Precisely because of the close-knit quality of village life, identity boundaries between Muslim and Jew were not always clear-cut and had to be constantly reinforced.

> It is common sense that when two societies are in long-term contact, they will begin to share some cultural characteristics. It is somewhat less obvious that sustained interaction may also lead to the growth of differences, often reflecting a societal "drive" to create and sustain marks of distinction. Both processes may coexist and even reinforce one another. This may be seen with reference to the Jewish minority within the Muslim world. (Goldberg 2013:19)

[39] This is similar to how Yiddish functioned in pre-World War II eastern Europe: "Yiddish also became the lingua franca, the wireless international network linking Jews of distant places, when they met in trade or wandering and resettlement" (Harshav 1990:21).

[40] Jewish men throughout history were often translators, given the important role translation had in the study of the Torah as the foundation for textual exegesis (Kronfeld 2016:184), a study in which most traditional Jewish males participate.

[41] Traditional Jewish learning is a process of bilingual exegesis from the Hebrew or Aramaic text (Bible or Talmud) translated and interpreted into language of daily use, in this case, Judeo-Arabic.

Such distinctions were not limited to clearly defined religious markers. Among these markers, maintaining a distinctive language (beyond the use of Hebrew, mostly by males, for mostly liturgical contexts) was also a distinguishing aspect of identity, in a way similar to the more obviously Jewish identity markers such as kosher food laws and head coverings.

Historically,[42] a central characteristic of Jewish self-identity has been a strong sense of difference from the non-Jewish majority among whom Jews live.[43] "The concept of holiness and the 'unifying idea' of Jewish ritual law likewise are closely linked to the idea of separation" (Wolfson 2010). Language was often a significant way Jews distinguished themselves from non- Jews. "Jewish" languages have differed from those of the non-Jewish majority by as little as the addition of a few Hebrew words or by so much that they are largely unintelligible to outsiders (in addition to being written in Hebrew characters). Judeo-Arabic and Judeo-Berber tended towards the former, whereas Yiddish and Ladino the latter, as indicated in the naming of the languages. Therefore, ironically, Jews adopting Arabic in Berber-speaking areas could also be seen *not* as adopting the ruling, or majority, language as elsewhere in the Arabic-speaking world (including Moroccan coasts and cities), but rather, as using Arabic to distinguish themselves from the local language of majority rule, which in this case was Berber. In this sense, their use of Arabic more closely resembled Jews' use of Yiddish or Ladino elsewhere, or Aramaic in Kurdistan, which distinguished Jews from the non-Jewish majorities. This sentiment was expressed by my Jewish interlocutors, as well as by those of Goldberg, residing in Israel when he interviewed them: "Arabic was spoken only by the Jews, being associated with the synagogue, liturgy and knowledge of Jewish texts. In one sense then, Arabic has the connotation, locally, of being a 'Jewish language'" (Goldberg 1983:63).[44]

Reflecting this idea that Atlas Jews spoke Arabic as a boundary marker for this religious minority in a dominant Berber-speaking Muslim population, Makhluf (a Jewish man in his late fifties), a native of the High Atlas village of Amassine who is now residing in Israel, explained:

> Berber was the language of the gentiles... [Arabic] is also what differentiates Jews from gentiles. Like clothing.[45] The way of dressing and the language differentiated Jews from gentiles there [in Morocco].

In an attempt to understand my Jewish interlocutors' attitudes towards Moroccan Arabic and Berber, I have charted the binaries suggested by the associations each language had for them (of course, these only serve as a guide; the categories certainly overlapped):

[42] This was particularly true until the mid-twentieth century, that is, before World War II devastated European Jewish communities and the establishment of the state of Israel (1948) led to the mass migrations of Jews from Europe and the Middle East and North Africa. These two events, arguably interrelated, thus dramatically shifted the nature of Jewish communities worldwide.

[43] For a specific North African example on distinguishing symbols of Jewish identity in Tunisia, see Udovitch and Valensi, 1984.

[44] One of my Jewish informants in Israel told me that when members of her family went back to visit her village in the Taliouine region, Muslim Berber villagers told them they had forgotten Arabic after the Jews left. Muslim villagers told me that many of their former Jewish neighbors who visited from Israel still spoke Berber fluently.

[45] The difference was most notable in the head coverings of men and women.

Berber	Arabic
oral	written (and oral)[46]
non-Jewish (Muslim)	Jewish
profane/secular local	religious/sacred/ /piety[47]
(intimate) heart	global/universal[48] mind
(emotional) rural	(intellectual) urban
(primitive)	(sophisticated)[49]

Judeo-Arabic has had a strong religious connotation for many Moroccan Jews, not only those in Berber-speaking regions.[50] Because neither the Hebrew of the Torah nor the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Talmud (the Jewish sacred texts) were spoken languages, Judeo-Arabic was the language of instruction in the *sla*, and was used for translating and interpreting the Hebrew and Aramaic texts.[51] This was also the case for the *dvar Torah* (Hebrew for sermon, lit. "word of Torah").[52] This appeared to be true even for Jews whose first language was Berber. For example, Haim (a Jewish man in his seventies), a native of the Tifnout region who is now living in Israel, told me:

> HAIM: At home we usually spoke Berber. But in the street, one understood Arabic. Even though we spoke in Berber, we understood Arabic, Moroccan Arabic, of course. Yes, we learned to speak Arabic. So we speak Berber and also Arabic.
> SARAH: But at home? With your mother?
> HAIM: Only in Berber, because she didn't know Arabic. My father, even when he came here [to Israel], it was hard for him to speak Arabic. He just knew a few words here and there. My mother learned to speak a bit of Arabic.

[46] There was and is also a substantial repertoire of songs and stories, for example, in Moroccan Arabic.

[47] This is somewhat true for Berber Muslims as well. However, there is a rich corpus of Berber songs and poetry related to religion and religious edification.

[48] Note that these first four fit with why Chetrit says that Judeo-Berber is not a "whole" Jewish language. See footnote 12 above. The first two binaries fit only for Berber Jews, where as the last four have some resonance with Moroccan Muslims in general.

[49] I mentioned this similar attitude among Muslims in post-Independence Morocco earlier in this chapter.

[50] Simon Levy writes that this religious connotation for Judeo-Arabic also pervaded among urban Moroccan Jews beginning to adopt French as their home language. "In the religious domain, Judeo-Arabic resisted French for a long time: the sermons are still often presented in Judeo-Arabic" (2001:20, my translation).

[51] Additionally, a large body of liturgy was also written and performed in Judeo-Moroccan Arabic, particularly *piyyutim* (Heb., sing., *piyyut,* liturgical poems), which have a unique place in Moroccan Jewish religious and artistic expression (as well as of other Middle Eastern and North African Jewish communities). These were composed and sung in Judeo-Moroccan Arabic, in addition to Hebrew and Aramaic. There have been extensive studies on these in Israel.

[52] A rabbi typically presents the *dvar* Torah in a community's local language. This sermon, an essential part of the Sabbath morning services, interprets the weekly Torah reading, which is in Hebrew. The *dvar* Torah is also referred to as *drash* or *drasha* (Hebrew for homiletic exegesis) particularly by Ashkenazi communities.

"A flexible language of conversation in a direct speech situation was desirable for this purpose [studying sacred texts]. Aramaic fulfilled that role in Talmudic times but became a holy and foreign text to be explicated in its turn" (Harshav 1990:20). Thus, in Morocco, Arabic fulfilled the role that Aramaic once had.

SARAH: What about for the *dvar* Torah?
HAIM: The Torah, of course, was read in the Holy Tongue, in Hebrew. The *dvar Torah* was always in the holy tongue, that is, Arabic, not Berber.[53]

Makhluf expressed a similar sentiment linking Arabic to Torah study:

> Also, in the *Sla*, where they taught us, they taught us Arabic. We'd read the Torah portion [in Hebrew], and the rabbi would explain it to us in Arabic. In Berber it's not possible to explain it. It's just not. Because what you studied in sla—everything you studied—was explained in Arabic, in the Arabic of the Jews.

Although Makhluf did not use the term "Judeo-Arabic," he acknowledges that the Arabic that Jews used to explain the sacred texts was particular to Jews. Harvey Goldberg heard testimonies expressing a similar association of Arabic with the synagogue from his Tifnouti interlocutors, who had immigrated to Israel, and who

> confirmed that the mother tongue of the Jews in that region was *shilha* [Judeo-Arabic term for Berber], even though many of the men learned to speak Arabic. Arabic was first learned in the context of the sla: the school in the local synagogues where males began to learn the Hebrew alphabet, gain competence in reading from the prayer book and the Bible, and were taught to translate the Biblical text into standard Judaeo-Arabic... In this setting, Arabic was spoken only by the Jews, being associated with the synagogue, liturgy and knowledge of Jewish texts. In one sense then, Arabic has the connotation, locally, of being a "Jewish language". An informant from Tifnout stated: "Anyone who knew a little Torah could speak Arabic." (Goldberg 1983:63)

AFFINITY: REFRAMING THE QUESTION

I would now like to reframe the issue of Jews having predominantly spoken Arabic in Berber-speaking environments. Why it is that Jews maintained oral—and other cultural — traditions in Berber, despite speaking Arabic as their first language? Given this prevalence of Arabic as the home language for Atlas Jews, it is noteworthy that many maintained the practice of Berber in various oral traditions, and some even upon immigration to Israel. As Chetrit observes, "The question remains [to be answered] as formulated: what place did Judeo-Berber have in Moroccan Jewish communities?" (Chetrit 2007:225, my translation). But rather than proposing answers, he asks a related question instead: "Another question concerns the evolution of practices of this language at the time according to the vicissitudes of Jewish presence in Morocco" (ibid., my translation), which he follows with a detailed discussion of the abundant

[53] Some of my Jewish interlocutors would mention that they knew of villages where the *dvar* Torah would have had to be in Berber for the villagers to understand, but, of course, that was never the case for their own village.

traces of Berber in Judeo-Arabic.[54] Although Chetrit wrote that Jewish men spoke Berber as necessitated by their work ("economic survival") with Muslims (Chetrit 2007:217), I believe cultural associations to have played at least as large a role. I suggest that what he describes regarding the role of Arabic traditions for Jews in other regions of Morocco is also true for Jewish practice of Berber traditions in the Atlas:

> Socioeconomic relations with their fortuitous cultural encounters cannot by themselves explain the large scope of the various cultural spaces shared by Moroccan Jews and Muslims in... popular oral corpuses of texts and melodies, etc.
> .Thus a larger set of hypotheses is required for explaining the formation of this common cultural stock. A more accurate explanation should envisage the essential oral forms and structures of the cultural life of the two populations, Jewish and Muslim, and their proximity over a very long period, from the eighth century to the present time. (Chetrit 2010:69)

I believe the answers to the above questions lie in part in poetics, that is, in the different registers, aesthetics, and repertoires that the Berber language afforded Atlas Jewish villagers.[55] For my Jewish interlocutors, Berber has had an emotional resonance, reconnecting them to the cultural traditions and landscapes of their childhoods as well as to their former Muslim neighbors.[56] I observed this emotional resonance not so much in my interlocutors' words, but in the joy that greeted any words I would say in Berber (beyond amusement of a non-Moroccan's feeble attempts at speaking the language), and the excitement in seeing photographs and listening to the recordings of my Muslim interlocutors from Morocco. At the *hillulot* (saint pilgrimages) in Morocco that bring back Atlas Jews from all over the world, I observed their deep attachment to the beautiful yet rugged land of their childhood, an attachment equal in power to that of the *saddiqim* in bringing them back year after year. Jews born in villages in the vicinity of the shrines bring their foreign-raised children and grandchildren to visit their ancestral homes.[57] Many have maintained close friendships with the local Muslim Berbers (a closeness I witnessed when attending *hillulot*).

Highlighted in the reminiscences of both my Jewish and Muslim interlocutors was the communal dance, the *ahwash,* which accompanies many types of celebration, such as those marking life cycles or agricultural ones. The term is used for a variety of communal dances, and

[54] Of course, Moroccan Arabic also has an abundance of Berber. But Chetrit includes many examples that seem to be particular to the Judeo-Arabic of Taroudant, in southern Morocco (such as vocabulary used in weddings).

[55] Linguist Fatima Sadiqi argues somewhat similarly of Berber's survival in Morocco overall: "It is not, up to now, a language of education or commerce [n14: Except in the south of Morocco where it is widely used in commerce]. However, although Berber has neither a written form nor a strong written parent language, it has survived from ancient times because of its historicity, as well as its dynamism and vitality ... Berber is mainly used in informal and intimate situations such as the family and among close friends ... Being a typical indigenous language, Berber embodies a huge oral culture where women have an important place. This culture comprises poems, folktales, songs, etc." (Sadiqi 2003:46).

[56] What Sadiqi writes of Berber today for Muslims as "a language of cultural identity, home, the family, village affiliation, intimacy, traditions, orality, and nostalgia to a remote past" (Sadiqi 2013:225) seems fitting also for Moroccan Jewish immigrants to Israel.

[57] For in-depth scholarship on this topic, see Kosansky, 2002 and 2003.

while the verbal form means "to dance," the noun by extension includes the overall event, inclusive of drumming and sung poetry. The *ahwash* is one of the most significant cultural forms shared by Jews and Muslims in the Tashelhit-speaking villages of Morocco's southwestern Atlas Mountains and Anti-Atlas Mountains.[58] The significance of this sharing of cultural occasions by Atlas Jews and Muslims cannot be understated, as Philip Schuyler observed in his fieldwork in the same general regions where I carried out my fieldwork: "Among the *tashlhit-speaking* Berbers (Ishlhin) of south-western Morocco, the performance of music is both a favourite form of entertainment and a socially significant act" (1979:65). The reminiscences of both Atlas Jews and their Muslim neighbors attest to the importance of Berber cultural traditions in their lives.

Jews continued some of these traditions after their immigration to Israel, including the *ahwash.* As one man described: "We had an *ahwash* for my son's bar mitzvah. We'd do it after the close of *Shabbat* [the Sabbath, which ends at sundown]. We did it on happy occasions." Whenever I asked Jews (regardless of whether their first language had been Berber or Arabic) what was the prevalent language of singing that accompanied these dances, my interlocutors expressed shock that I had implied it could be any language other than Berber.

The practice of *ahwash* continued up into the beginning of the twentieth-first century, but is almost non-existent today. I am not aware of such continuous practice of the *ahwash* anywhere in the Moroccan Jewish diaspora outside of Israel.[59] The practice in Israel was likely due to the continued cohesion of some village communities that moved from Morocco to Israel; practice of these traditions was strongest where such communities lived together in small settlements such as *moshavim* (collective farms; s. *moshav),* rather than in development towns where Atlas Jews were also often dispersed in Israel.

To the extent that Berber cultural traditions had been perpetuated in Israel is noteworthy also because Jews who immigrated to Israel rarely if ever kept up Berber as a spoken language, and because of the denigration associated with Berber culture in Israel. Even immigrants to Israel who had spoken Berber as their first language in Morocco often began to speak Moroccan Arabic among themselves (if they learned it from temporary moves to larger urban centers, as a step engineered by the Israeli immigration agency towards bringing Atlas Jews to Israel) and with their children[60] (who then often spoke Hebrew to each other, as is typical of immigrant children everywhere to speak the "new" language) after immigration to Israel. Most immigrants also learned to converse in Modern Hebrew. None reported having passed on Berber to the next generation (though some members of the Israeli-born generation told me their mothers had sung

[58] I assert this from my own observations in fieldwork in the southwestern High Atlas and Anti-Atlas Mountains, and in Israel with Jews from these regions. Lakhsassi (2008), reporting on his fieldwork in the Atlas Mountains with Joseph Chetrit and Daniel Schroeter, also comments on the prevalence of these shared occasions in their interlocutors reminiscences.

Ahwash is the term in the Tashelhit dialect of that region. The term for a variety of collective dances in Tamazight (the dialect of the Middle Atlas and eastern High Atlas) is *ahiddus.* On general differences between the *ahwash* and *ahiddus,* see Rovsing Olsen (1997: Ch 4). I will go into more details of the *ahwash* in Chapter Three.

[59] To my knowledge, Berber Jews who remained in Morocco after having moved to urban centers have not continued the practice of performing an *ahwash.* Yet, gatherings in Morocco occasionally spark group singing in Berber, such as *hillulot* (saint pilgrimages; s. *hillula)* and Passover celebrations, both of which bring back significant numbers Moroccan Jews from their various "diasporas" outside of Morocco. Even the practice of *ahwash* in Morocco by Muslims has been much diminished, due to its commercialization together with the advent of radio, recordings, and television.

[60] This is also often the case among Berber Muslims in Morocco after moving to Arabic-dominated towns or cities.

them lullabies in Berber). However, some vocabulary has been transmitted, and several writers who immigrated at a young age or are second generation in Israel use Berber in literary writings (for example, Sami Shalom Chetrit in poetry; Uziel Hazan in novels) or scholarly texts (for example, Meir Amor).

Similar patterns exist, of course, in many immigrant communities. For Israel, particularly in the early years of statehood (the 1950s), the imposition of Hebrew monolingualism was an important facet of immigration policies.[61] For Jewish Arabic speakers in Israel, there was the increased stigma of partaking in the language and culture of the so-called enemy (in a nationalist discourse that opposes Jews to Arabs)—a view held particularly by the dominant Ashkenazi Jews but also internalized by Arabic-speaking Jews themselves. For Berber Jews, as noted earlier, there were the additional connotations of primitiveness, backwardness, stupidity, and worse. Much of this was internalized (in the shock of dislocation from Morocco and relocation followed by discrimination in Israel), yet many retained affection and nostalgia towards the physical and cultural landscapes of their native villages, of which Berber was an essential part.

For Jews who emigrated from the Atlas Mountains to Israel, "Berberness" has therefore been experienced both as heartfelt connection and as a source of stigma and internalized shame. In Israel, there has been ongoing discrimination against Jewish populations who emigrated from the Middle East and North Africa[62] (MENA) by the Ashkenazi hegemony.[63] In the hierarchies of discrimination of Jews *by* Jews in Israel, Moroccan immigrants have arguably been at the lowest end of the socio-cultural, economic, and political hierarchies of MENA Jews, and those originating in the Atlas Mountains even more so than other Moroccans,[64] although this the recognition of this distinction is mostly relevant among Moroccans themselves. As noted earlier, hierarchies and stereotypes also existed among Moroccan Jews; many Jews from Morocco's urban centers or coastal towns looked with disdain upon their rural brethren, and this carried over upon immigration to Israel[65] These marginalized communities, have literally been on the

[61] Arabic-speaking Jews were not the only populations to suffer from Israel's compulsory Hebrew monolingualism. Nurith Aviv's 2005 film *"Mi-Safa le-Safa*" ("From Language to Language") is a poignant expression of what Andersen (1983:78) writes of the phenomenon of "language[s] of state" in nation-building projects pushing out other languages as it applies to Israel; notably, Yiddish was also rejected for Hebrew, and is now spoken almost exclusively by ultra-orthodox Ashkenazi Jews who feel it profanes Hebrew to use it for secular purposes.

[62] In Israel these populations are also often called "Mizrahi" (Hebrew for "Easterners," or "Orientals") Jews as opposed to Ashkenazi Jews who are of European (especially Eastern) origin, and Sephardi Jews (those who were expelled from Spain in the fifteenth century, some of whom overlap with Mizrahi Jews and share liturgy). The term Mizrahi has had important political usefulness (see, for example, Shohat 1999), but also considered problematic (see for example, Shenhav 2006). My preference is to use "MENA Jews," or if further specification is relevant, then "Middle Eastern Jew" or "North African Jew," or the specific country the community is from.]

[63] This is still an issue in Israel today: "The socioeconomic gap between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim has since narrowed, spurred by a rise in interethnic marriage (about a third of Jewish Israeli children born today are ethnically mixed). But it hasn't disappeared altogether. Mizrahim earn roughly 25 percent less per capita than Ashkenazim, according to Momi Dahan, a professor of public policy at Hebrew University. Social and cultural tensions still percolate. In a 2007 poll, more than half of respondents characterized relations between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim in the country as 'not good' " (Margalit 2016).

[64] The socio-economic marginalization also exists for Berber Muslims still living today in the Atlas Mountains, though, of course, plays out differently than for Jews in Israel. There is significant scholarship on this topic; see for example, Hoffman (2008, particularly the Introduction), Maddy-Weitzman (2011), and Sadiqi (2014).

[65] The majority of the two large waves of Moroccan immigrants to Israel in the early 1950s and then again in the early 1960s were Atlas Jews (Chetrit 2007) as they were most susceptible to the promises of a better life made by the Zionist emissaries.

peripheries in Israel: economic, social, cultural, and geographic (this phenomenon is Israel is actually called "the *Peripherie").*[66] [67] The *Shleuhim,* as the Moroccan Jews from Berber-speaking regions have been pejoratively called in Hebrew (using the hebraicized plural of *Shleuh,*[61] Moroccan Arabic for Berber, which is also pejorative), have been stigmatized as backward and uneducated (and uneducable). The term *Shleuh* came to be used to stereotype any Israeli (though generally of MENA background) as backward or primitive. Y et, the term is also sometimes reappropriated with pride by Atlas Jews in both Israel and Morocco in rare cases of self-identifying as Berber.[68]

One expression of shame was the inability, or unwillingness, to remember. After I complimented an interviewee on how much she remembered, she remarked somewhat bitterly, "Everyone remembers, they just say they don't." In several cases of sibling pairs, one sister, usually the younger, claimed not to remember the Berber language, while the older one insisted that the younger actually did remember, but didn't want to make the effort or to admit it, as in the following example:

> You know, excuse me, it's just that when people say they don't know anything, they're only being ashamed. That's all. But they know everything! There's nothing to be ashamed of! So what! It's not at all shameful. Why say you don't know?
>
> When I come, and she [referring to her sister] puts on some recording in *Shilha*, I say, "How can you have come from Morocco at the same time I came, and [say you do] not know a single word? How, how could you have come to that?"
>
> I'm proud. I haven't forgotten anything. I know it all.

Haim, the interlocutor quoted earlier, commented after he and his wife returned from visiting Morocco in 2007 (not having been there since leaving in the 1950s):

[66] The periphery "is, as a rule, less densely populated and more economically deprived than the center" (Kordova 2012).

[67] Despite the similarity between the words *Shilha* and Tashelhit, Berber Muslims insist that *Shleuh* has no relation to Tashelhit. *Shleuhit* is the hebraicized form of Shilha, the language.

[68] At a wedding I attended in Israel in 1999, where the bride and groom were each from *moshavim* (communal villages) inhabited almost entirely by Atlas Jews, a man in his late fifties looked out over the full reception hall and, with a big smile, exclaimed proudly, "We're all *Shleuhim* here!" While there was neither Berber nor even Moroccan music at the reception, this man and others performed a traditional Berber *ahwash* dance with singing at the groom's father's home after the evening reception, and lasting well into the next morning.

We got a letter from the National Social Security Service[69] saying, "We heard you were in Morocco. How did you have the money to go there?" My wife's brother paid for everything. So he wrote a nice letter like that explaining that he gave us the money. So I went to talk to the guy at the National Social Security office, explaining that it was a "roots" trip for us. The guy asked me where I was from in Morocco. I said, "I'm from the mountains." Wow, he was pleased. He said, "Good for you!" Why?
Because many *Shleuhim* [Berbers] will say they're from Casablanca or Marrakesh [i.e. the cities]. They won't say where they're from. I'm not ashamed, what do I have to be ashamed of? That's where I'm from, I'm from the villages, from the mountains. I'm proud of it. But others are not.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown how religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic identities intersected dynamically in the profoundly multilingual and religious society that existed in Atlas Mountain villages. For Jewish villagers in particular, language functioned as a tool in the construction of their multi-layered identities as Jews, Berbers, Moroccans, and eventually Israelis. Berber's linguistic and cultural status in the socio-political hierarchies of both Morocco and Israel, particularly in the second half of the twentieth century, suggests perhaps in part why the material I recorded has not been more widely researched, and why the rich repertoire of oral traditions has been mostly overlooked and today, nearing disappearance.

[69] Israel's National Social Security Service (Bituah Leumi) administers welfare, pensions, as well as social security insurance allowances.

CHAPTER THREE

La chanson d'Izza et la réplique d'Hanna :
Expression créative partagée et coproduction de la différence

Table, what's the matter? I see you're feeling down. Is it because
the server is on your left?
— excerpt from "Izza's song"

Hanna, is happiness on your right
that you are looking at the arm of your elder?
— excerpt from "Hanna's song"

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I use songs and anecdotes of two women as catalysts to explore varied facets of affiliation and differentiation in the shared cultural forms of creative expression by Jews and Muslims in Atlas Mountain village life. To do so, this chapter continues the exploration of Jewish participation in Berber cultural traditions— both theoretically and literally—begun in Chapter Two. For the sake of clarity, I call the songs "Izza's song" and "Hanna's song," after the two women who sang them. Izza sang her song to me directly, and Hanna's song was recounted to me by a Muslim man. Izza was a ninety-year-old Jewish woman living in Israel, and Hanna was a Jewish woman who died decades ago in Morocco. Both songs are poetic depictions of tension at borders—borders of gender in Izza's, and of gender, religion, and village identity in Hanna's—and the creativity that issues from this tension. Exploring the circulation of symbols that appear in Izza's song through other songs and texts, we see poetic codes crossing boundaries of gender, ethnicity, language, religion, geography (rural-urban), subject matter (personalpolitical), and orality and literacy. In the discussion of Hanna's song, we explore how Hanna herself crosses boundaries, both literally and poetically.

While the theme of Izza's song does not explicitly address Jewish-Muslim relations, the song's style, symbolism, and genre reflect the varied cultural inter-weavings that nourished artistic expression for both Jews and Muslims. The discussion also points to gender as an identity marker with its own cultural references and oral traditions, regardless of religious affiliation. The chapter challenges simplified assumptions of cultural ownership and originality by investigating Berber cultural expression that is at the same time *neither* and *both* Jewish and Muslim. Hanna's song is part of a corpus of Berber oral traditions that emerged directly from intercommunal tension between Jews and Muslims, and plays on the theme of the pulls between affinity and separation. The song and its analysis reflect how villagers themselves, both in the past and in their present memories, engaged in a refashioning and negotiating of boundaries between Atlas Jewish and Muslim identities. Rather than a unidirectional acculturation of the minority into the majority culture, Berber creative expression engaged by Muslims and Jews reflects a dynamic

interchange, and I posit the idea that many Berber oral traditions are the co-production of Muslims and Jews. The chapter reveals how both Izza's and Hanna's songs were embedded in and issued from rich cultural worlds that included Berber, Jewish, and Muslim traditions.

GEO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Izza and Hanna were each born in the Tifnout River valley, The river winds its way down through the southern flanks of the High Atlas Mountains, and the villages dotting either side are even today accessible only by dirt roads. Parts of the valley can be closed in by snow for as many as four months in the winter. Muslims still cultivate small terraced plots for subsistence farming. As throughout the Atlas Mountains, Jewish men were peddlers, blacksmiths, saddle-makers, tailors, or cobblers. Jews and Muslims generally lived side by side in the small villages. The overall populations of the villages averaged 250 to 500 inhabitants total, of which 30 to 70 were Jews (Bontoux 1951), and Jews of these villages considered themselves part of one larger Tifnout Jewish community. For example, an elderly Tifnouti man in Israel told me that in his natal Moroccan village they often did not have a *minyan* (the quorum of ten adult men needed for certain prayers). "What happened? For the holidays, what would we do? We'd take turns, for example, if in Imlil they were missing just one, so we'd go by foot to pray together, all the communities together."

Population movements and migration to Tifnout's villages was common over past centuries. Many, if not most, Muslims came to Tifnout from other parts of Morocco, rather than descending from a single local tribe as in other regions of the Atlas Mountains. Migrations were due to droughts and tribal fighting over arable lands, water uses, etc. The river valley was attractive for its abundant water. In several of the villages, when I inquired about Muslim origins, I was told, "Everyone comes from somewhere else." Whereas, often when I asked Muslims when Jews came to their village, the response was that Jews had always been there: "I met them when I came" (figuratively, "they were here when I was born").[1]

The Jews of Tifnout emigrated from Morocco to Israel in the 1950s. As elsewhere in rural Morocco, this was due to intense efforts by Israeli emissaries, the *Tsiyonim* (Zionists) as my Moroccan Jewish interlocutors called them, using the Hebrew word no matter which language they were speaking (Arabic, French, or Hebrew).[2] Such mass emigrations of Moroccan Jews effectively ended Jewish life in the Atlas Mountains. Only a handful of individuals or families stayed on in some villages or towns, even into the beginning of the twenty-first century, although not in Tifnout.

[1] Such responses were typical in the Tifnout region. However, in other regions there were memories of Jewish movements, as well as those of Muslim movements.

[2] The Hebrew term for emissaries, *shelihim,* had been used over the centuries for rabbis coming from *Eretz Israel* on various missions (and often staying to live out their lives, as so many of the *saddiqim,* or holy men, were said to have done), so the term seemed to be reserved for that specific usage by my interlocutors.

IZZA'S SONG: SHARED CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Izza, a Jewish woman who was ninety years old when I met her in her home in Israel, was a native of the Moroccan village of Tayyurt, a tiny village built into the hill on the less populated, less accessible side of the Tifnout River. From the more accessible side, the dirt road ends at the river, which during most of the year is made up of myriad streams, rather than a single rush of water. Various wooden footbridges that look like crude ladders lain over piles of river stones are used to cross these streams. When I visited Tayyurt in 2011, prior to my fieldwork in Israel, elderly Muslim villagers told me that only two extended Jewish families had lived there—fewer than in any of the other Tifnout river valley villages. Given their small number, I had not expected to locate Jews from Tayyurt in Israel. Following up on a lead regarding another Tifnout villager now living in Israel, I accidentally stumbled upon Izza's youngest sister, and, starting with her, worked my way up the age-ladder of siblings.

On the phone, Izza hesitated: "Why should I talk to you? I don't know you." But when I mentioned the name of her native village, and that I had been there recently, I was immediately no longer a stranger and she welcomed me to her home. As with other interlocutors living in Israeli development towns (built in the 1950s to house the large influx of immigrants and to populate less desirable and dangerous peripheries, as mentioned in Chapter Two), she lived in the public housing projects *(shikunim* in Hebrew), cheap, mass-produced and densely populated, concrete block-shaped buildings—*blokim,* as they are called in Hebrew slang, after the English "blocks."

Izza was a small, frail woman, with radiant, round face, and the same large blue eyes of her younger sisters. She was a widow and lived with a son, who popped in and out of the room where we sat side by side on a couch. When I showed her a photo of her village on my computer, she kissed the screen. She was warm and laughed easily. We spoke in Hebrew, peppered with Moroccan Arabic. Izza claimed she did not remember Berber, but when I played her my recording of an elderly woman from her village, she laughed heartily and said that she understood. Typically, Muslim informants in Morocco reeled off the first names of their former Jewish neighbors, delighting these same neighbors or their children when they themselves listened to my recordings; some showed me their goose bumps upon hearing names of now- deceased relatives. Izza told me that her family had spoken Berber at home, that "Everyone spoke *SMeuhif* there. There was only *Shleuhit* there, there was nothing else [laughs]."[3] [4] She said that it was only when they moved to the town of Asni when she was sixteen (a move engineered by the Israeli immigration agency as a step towards gathering Jews of remote areas to bring them to Israel) that they learned Arabic.

As we spoke, I showed her the photographs of Jewish communities in the Atlas Mountains, taken by Elias Harrus during the 1940s-1950s.[5] *"Kaparra, kaparra,*[6]*"* she interjected every so

[3] *Shleuhit* is the Hebraicized term of *Shilha,* the term used in Judeo-Moroccan Arabic for the Berber language.

[4] As noted in Chapter Two, Tifnout is one of the few regions where Jews actually spoke Berber as their first language up until the mid-twentieth century.

[5] The photographs were taken by Elias Harrus of the Jews of the Atlas Mountains and Saharan oases, and have been presented in several international exhibitions, which I helped curate, and as well as in a catalogue, *Juifs parmi les Berbères* (1999).

[6] *Kaparra* is used by Moroccan Jews as "an exaggerated form of endearment meaning 'may all ills come to me instead of you'" (oral source). It comes from the Hebrew word, *kaparah* for atonement, sacrifice, or ransom.

often, kissing me with delight at the photographs and the recordings. She wanted to know what her village was like now, and she was surprised to hear that it still did not have electricity. Despite that she commented, “In Morocco, everything is good. What’s missing?” I asked her why they left. “That I don’t know.” She turned to her son to ask him in Arabic, “Why did we leave?” He answered that it was the *Aliyah* (Hebrew for immigration to Israel; literally, “the going up”). She turned back to me and explained, “Israel wanted us.” We spoke of my research, and she said, “I can’t help you,” adding regretfully, “We didn’t study anything. We were busy with children and work.”

When I saw that Izza was getting tired, I prepared to leave. She was quietly looking at the Harrus photographs again, particularly Atlas Jewish women and girls in traditional local Jewish dress, that is, modestly covered in long dresses, with the hair of married women carefully hidden under a variety of headdresses. Suddenly, she said, “There [Morocco] girls didn’t do that,” pointing to her groin, “Here [Israel] they do it all.” An elderly Muslim woman whom I had interviewed in Izza’s native village in Morocco similarly deplored the looser sexual mores of today’s young women.[7] Then slowly, very softly at first, Izza started singing in Berber. She sang a bit, and then said, “My head isn’t ok.” And she sang some more, hesitantly, stopping and starting:

Table, what’s the matter? I see you’re feeling down.
Is it because the server is on your left?
Is it because the teapot is not English?
Is it because kettle is not a [Russian] tea urn[8]?
Is it because the teacups are not glass?

Table, what’s the matter? I see you’re feeling down.
Is it because the server is on your left?
The table says to you: If one doesn’t have money,
Keep him away from me, because I’m defiant.

It was only after Izza sang for me that she told me she had continued to sing in Berber for many years, despite no longer using it in speech.[9] “I used to sing in the house all the time,” she explained. “Only alone at home. My husband didn’t let me sing outside. Now I don’t remember anything.” I objected, complimenting her on her memory, and adding that her younger sister Yacout had told me that she herself did not remember very much from that period, and that Yacout only sang in Moroccan Arabic and Hebrew. “She just doesn’t want to [remember],” Izza responded, whereas Y acout had warned me that Izza would be too old to remember anything.

There is a difference in the use of *kapárra* (Moroccan Jewish form) versus *kapore* (Ashkenazi/Yiddish form); Ashkenazi usage is in favor of self, and/or even vindictively towards victim (Matisoff 2000:62-63).

[7] What Kapchan writes of nostalgia in her seminal work on women in the marketplace of rural Morocco is apt for these women: “The fetishization of a conceptual past.. .is an attempt to be situated in relation to rapidly changing social practices and their accompanying values” (Kapchan 1996:45).

[8] The song has the actual Berber word for “English” but not for “Russian, ” I originally translated as “samovar. ” The Berber word is calqued from the French *vapeur).*

[9] The power of songs and stories in memory is an important topic for further study. Neurologist Oliver Sacks wrote of this in *Musicophilia*, 2007. See also Christopher Bergland’s “Why Do the Songs from Your Past Evoke Such Vivid Memories?” 2013.

The Song and Its Tea Setting Symbolism

It was only after I returned to Morocco to continue my research there that I got a complete translation of Izza's song—directly into English—from Abderrahmane Lakhsassi, a renowned scholar of Berber culture.[10] Lakhsassi believes that what Izza sang for me is probably only an extract of a longer dialogue-in-song.

Izza had told me that the "table" in the song is a woman, and that the song is a conversation between a woman and a man: "She has her eyes closed, so he says, 'What do you want, what are you missing?'" Izza used the Hebrew word for "man" not "husband," and when I asked about that, she told me that it was not a wedding song. It is interesting to note that Izza did not translate the song into Hebrew for me as did many of my other interlocutors in Israel from the original Berber of their anecdotes or songs, but rather followed an exegetical drive to explain it to me.

Like other forms of folklore, songs provide aesthetic, sometimes witty, and, importantly, acceptable ways to express taboo topics and feelings. Berber oral poetry[11] often functions on at least two levels: direct or literal, and hidden or figurative,[12] creating intentional ambiguity. Lyrics can be coded symbols with figurative meanings that may or may not be generally known. A song ostensibly about an everyday ritual turns out to be about marital relations; or a song that seems to be about a wedding might contain a political message.[13] A wide array of symbols for male- female relationships is characteristic of Berber poetry (Jouad 1986). Among these symbols is the tea setting; a corpus of songs employs it in both Berber and Moroccan Arabic.[14]

Although mint tea is still of prime importance in Morocco (it is considered Morocco's "national drink"), Lakhsassi asserted that the rituals and symbolism associated with it are mostly lost today, (personal communication 2012). If one wanted to date the song, and possibly the tea setting symbolism (terminus post quem): tea in Morocco is a relatively recent phenomenon, introduced by England in the eighteenth century, but only by the beginning of the twentieth century had tea "reached all of the Moroccan countryside and even the mountains" (Lakhsassi 1999:172).[15] The products associated with it held prestige: glass cups, along with silver tea trays,

[10] Lakhsassi is Professor Emeritus of Islamic Studies at Mohammed V University in Rabat, Morocco.

[11] I use poetry and song interchangeably, as virtually all Berber poetry is sung.

[12] This is of course true of much poetry, and there is a particular tradition in both classical Arabic and Hebrew poetry of two standard layers of meaning. The terms for the deeper meanings in Moroccan Arabic are *remez* (hint) or *beten* in classical Arabic (belly) in contrast to the external, apparent, literal *(daher,* Arabic) meaning. This is similar to the traditional interpretive method of reading Hebrew literature (including poetry), in which there is also a *remez* (a hidden or symbolic meaning) and a *peshat* (direct, explicit meaning), together with two further levels of meaning: comparative and mystical.

[13] For example, a Muslim interlocutor recounted that, during French colonization, a Jewish man sang a secret message disguised as a wedding song to warn the village chief *(amghar* in Berber) that someone from the government *(makhzani* in Arabic, but used also in Berber generally for anyone connected to the ruling authorities) was going to kill him and that he needed to escape that night.

[14] Abderrahmane Lakhsassi and Abdlehad Sebti, both Moroccan scholars, co-authored a book on the history and customs of tea from the Middle East to North Africa (Sebti and Lakhsassi 1999). The book contains traditions in both Berber and Arabic for such sung poems not necessarily performed by women in which the tea setting is used to symbolize a variety of issues.

[15] Jews played a significant role in bringing [the tradition of] tea (and sugar) to these southern regions of Morocco (also sugar in general to Morocco), and likely the utensils as well, given their role as traders. "As a result of their

teapots, kettles, as in the song, were all considered luxurious utensils, and were certainly a mark of prestige in Izza's time, as she sings, "Is it because the teapot is not English?"[16]

To emphasize tea's earlier significance Lakhsassi explained that in the 1940s and 1950s a tribe could exile someone merely for serving tea in the wrong way, such as from the left, as in "Izza's song." "The left" stands for all that is negative, whether something that is incorrect or bad luck (it can be used as a verb in Berber; one might say "my luck 'lefted' " to mean "I've had bad luck"), for example. It can also symbolize sadness, linking it to the idea of "feeling down" in the first line. The Berber word, *tnudemt,* is difficult to translate. It has a sense of sleepiness, together with a feeling of being despondent or downhearted, which is why Izza says that the woman has her eyes closed.

Lakhsassi also wrote that "songs which link tea and love are commonplace" (Lakhsassi 1999:170). I heard examples of similar symbolism of "tea settings" from both Jews and Muslims, according to which the table represents the female of a couple. I include the "table" in the tea setting, because traditional tables in these regions are essentially round trays with short "legs" on them, sitting low to the ground; one sits on pillows or directly on rug-covered floors, rather than on chairs. In these related songs, my interlocutors added that the teapot represents the man/husband,[17] and the cups the children.[18]

Hamou, an elderly Muslim man told me the story of another "tea song" from this same area (Tifnout) having been "brought" to his village of Ighil N'Ogho of the Anti-Atlas Mountains by a woman who married into the village from Tifnout. The story he told weaves a complicated path across religious, gendered, and geographic boundaries:

relative mobility, it was Jewish traders from Marrakesh who were largely responsible for introducing goods of foreign origin, such as tea, into remote areas of the south" (Gottreich: 2010:114, among others). Writing of the region of Zagora, far to the southeast of Tifnout, Stefania Pandolfo observes:

> Both tea and sugar have relatively recent histories in Morocco as elsewhere in the Mediterranean ... Tea did not make an appearance until the eighteenth century through international trade (and later in this southern region), and sugar made an even later appearance in this area where dates and honey were the customary sweeteners. Tea was, and still is, a luxury item, an expression of value ... It was made available through the caravan trade.. .and its commerce was for a long time monopolized by the local Jewish community. The consumption of tea was reserved to the local elite and, for the most part, only to men. Sugar came with the colonial period, and again, Jews had a monopoly on it. (Pandolfo 1998:338n41)

[16] This is a reminder of how so-called traditions are not static, but rather cultural processes (García Canclini 1995; Hobsbawm 1983), always in flux, given that tea today is considered a quintessential Moroccan tradition.
[17] In Berber, the word for table is grammatically feminine, and that for teapot is masculine.
[18] Katherine Hoffman, an anthropologist who studied women's songs in the Sous Valley of the Anti-Atlas Mountains (a region southwest of Tifnout), also recorded examples of songs in which "the groom was figured as the teapot, both in Tashelhit and in Moroccan Arabic sung poetry" (personal communication 2012).

Two sisters in Israel, originally from a small village in the Taliouine region (today six hours drive southwest of Tifnout) told me:

> TAMOU: The cups are the children, the tray/table is the mother.
> SOLAIKA: The teapot is the mother.
> TAMOU: No, the father.
> SOLAIKA: Ah, the father. *Essiniya* [tray, in Arabic] is the mother, and the cups are the children.
> SARAH: So this is in songs?
> TAMOU: No, it's just a saying.

> There was a Jewish man in Asfzimmer—you should ask about him there—this man came to the Khalifa [local official, a Muslim] here and said, "I want to be Muslim." He converted and married a [Muslim] woman from Tifnout. She often thought about her native village—she wasn't used to living here—and of her parents and of everything there, so she would sing: "The teapot and the bellows of Mama Hemd are gone." *[He laughs, and repeats it.]* When she remembers her home, she thinks of the utensils for making tea, and sings about them.

I asked Hamou several times what the song meant. He repeated, "She was thinking of the teapot with which she made tea." I kept pushing (though I realized later that his hesitancy was perhaps due to the presence of his wife and grown daughter, if not to mine). Finally, Hamou explained that the teapot and bellows (that would be used for lighting and controlling the small fire of the brazier to heat the tea) stood for the man ("he keeps her warm," my thirty-something research assistant explained to me, to make sure I understood, although he himself was hearing of these symbols for the first time). The platter stood for the woman (as in Izza's song) and the glasses stood for the children. Hamou said that the song signified that the woman was longing for her husband and children of her first marriage, whom she had divorced and left behind in her native village.

Beyond the poetic linkage of tea settings and love and/or sex, anthropologist Katherine Hoffman, who had carried out fieldwork in a region near Taliouine, reported to me that she heard the expression "to drink tea" used as a euphemism for sex: "This was something people told me in the Sous [river valley in the Anti-Atlas] and apparently was code for a prostitute or a woman's invitation to a man." Historian and linguist Norman Stillman also told me he had heard this anecdotally.[19]

Interplay between Oral and Written: The "Table" in Rabbinic Texts

The fact that in Berber society sex was carefully coded for both Jews and Muslims, the symbolic linking of tea and sex, and Izza's comment about modern sexual mores before she sang the song (which may have associatively triggered its recollection), suggest that the song has sexual implications, perhaps to do with satisfaction. Late antique Jewish texts prescribe "correct" conduct of a husband to ensure his wife's sexual satisfaction in order to restrict sexual activity to marriage.[20] The symbolism of a table representing a woman appears in Talmudic texts treating correct sexual activity.[21] "Overturning the table" is code for intercourse in a "non-standard" position (although it is not clear what that position is). There are no sexual positions forbidden halakhically (by Jewish law), though aversion to positions other than the male superior position

[19] The interlocutors reporting this to these two scholars were of a cohort a generation or two younger than my interlocutors who recited the songs.

[20] This is also true for some medieval Islamic texts. Among the most well known for the latter is the North African Shaykh Sidi ibn Muhammad al-Nafzawi's *The Perfumed Garden of Sensual Delight [ar-rawd al-'atir fi nuzhat al- khatir]*. While there are differing views on its intent, it is similar to Talmudic texts where, "the legitimate goal of the sexual act is bringing pleasure to the wife" and considered a *mitzvah*, or commandment (Biale 1984:139).

[21] In the Talmud, everything is regulated, including sex (Rachel Biale, public talk 2017).

dominates Talmudic discussion on the topic (Biale 1985: Ch 5).[22] For example, the text discusses a case in which a woman goes before a rabbi and says of her husband, "I set the table for him, but he upset it" (Babylonian Talmud: Nedarim 20b).[23] The text is ambiguous, leaving unclear whether the wife is complaining (implying that it is improper) or wants to know if it is acceptable, although the rabbi "sent her home empty-handed, stating that such sexual practices are permitted by the Torah" (Babylonian Talmud: Nedarim 20b; Biale 1984:138). "Serving from the left" (as the man asks the woman in Izza's song, "I see you're feeling down. Is it because the server is on your left?") in Moroccan society suggests improper and disrespectful behavior.

This is not to suggest that village women would be knowledgeable of Talmudic texts, yet the symbolism of the table, as well as the suggestion of women's sexual satisfaction, could easily be transmitted through the interplay of Jewish and Muslim, oral and written, folkloric and canonical religious texts. The idea of a rigid binary between oral and written texts is a false one. In Judaism and Islam in particular, the two have been in continuous dialogue. Both Jewish and Muslim religious cultures are deeply imbued with the interweaving of oral and written textual traditions.[24] Thus, while Izza's song appears to be part of a repertoire of songs circulating among Atlas Jews and Muslims, it may have thus become imbued with Jewish meaning along the way, while also transmitting local cultural references.[25]

Circulation and Transmission: Networks of Cultural Exchange

Situating Izza's song in a broader cultural context demonstrates the rich confluence of cultural references which Berber women—both Muslim and Jewish—drew upon for their songs. Singing was an integral part of daily life, even more so for females than males.[26] Girls and women sang while working (as they still do in rural Morocco) — carrying out daily tasks such as gathering wood or taking animals out to graze in order to alleviate the tedium of such tasks[27]—as

[22] "When we examine the *Halakhah* [Jewish law and tradition, literally "the way" (as *sharia*, or Islamic law, similarly means "the way")] we find a tension between the view that any sexual practice which increases sexual pleasure is legitimate as long as there is no 'destruction of seed,' and a restrictive view which frowns on any sexual practices other than intercourse in 'the missionary position.'" (Biale 1984:137)

[23] Translation by Biale (1984:137).

[24] I believe that what Harvey Goldberg writes of the Jews of Libya was apt for those of rural Morocco: "As a Jewish society, they viewed themselves as part of an ancient tradition forged by scripture and the writings of rabbinic sages who strove to maintain that tradition over the generations. It therefore behooves the researcher to take into account the written texts that played a role in shaping local practice, even though many of the less literate and nonliterate (in particular, women) members of society may barely have been aware of the textual aspects of time-honored customs" (1990:9).

For the dynamics at play between the oral and the written in Islamic texts, see, for example, Slyomovics 1998a.

[25] What Charles Briggs (2012:96) writes of circulation I apply to the circulation of symbols and codes: "Folklore is not an object that is simply deposited on the social landscape, growing in particular places and waiting to be found by a folklorist. It is rather actively made through the circulation of social representations and aesthetic forms through time and space and across borders, including those of race, genre, and mode of transmission (newspapers, oral history, ballads, etc.) representing these processes of circulation is a crucial dimension of folkloric performance."

[26] What Hoffman notes in particular for the Anti-Atlas, I found to be true in Tifnout of the High Atlas as well: "song pervades just about every domain of routine and ritual [for women]. Women and girls sing as they perform domestic and agricultural chores" (Hoffman 2002:512).

[27] Visitors to the Atlas Mountains often comment upon the juxtaposition of women and girls trudging under the heavy loads, while their bright singing voices bounce off the hillsides. As a reminder of the importance of

well as to celebrate special occasions such as preparing a young bride for marriage. Formal communal occasions such as weddings, as well as casual meetings on the path, opened up opportunities for songs to circulate across gender, religious, or tribal boundaries. As both religious communities were patrilocal,[28] marriage sometimes led Jewish and Muslim women away from their native villages.[29] They carried songs with them, adding to the breadth of their circulation and transmission. Additionally, as a text circulates it becomes imbued with particular meanings, depending on the contexts (and the singers, audiences, and those reminiscing). In these ways, both women and songs were border crossers.

When I played it for Muslim villagers in Morocco, Izza's song elicited varied interpretations. My own intervention thus had the unintended consequence of contributing to the song's circulation. No one in the immediate area of Izza's village recognized it, yet Muslim women from villages further away said they did, that it was a "known" song. However, it seemed to be the genre they knew, rather than this exact song. Everyone who heard the song was moved by it, and would start singing along (Izza sings it three times on my recording); young men wrote down the words.[30] Listeners did not seem to recognize any sexual references; my playing it elicited neither snickers nor embarrassment. Of course, it is possible, as Lila Abu-Lughod suggested in her seminal book on Bedouin women's oral poetry (1986), that what was accepted in song was not possible to acknowledge in public discourse, or in front of a stranger, particularly a woman?

Intended Ambiguity: The Tea Setting Song in Moroccan Popular Culture

Further emphasizing the rich circulation of traditions in which Izza's song resides, and the boundary crossing between various poetic traditions—including Berber and Moroccan Arabic, female and male, urban and rural—the first hit song by Morocco's famous musical band, Nass el Ghiwane is composed in this genre of a tea setting dialogue.[31] The song, *"Essiniya"* ("The Tea Tray,"[32] also the name of their debut 1973 album) by Nass el Ghiwane (who have been called variously "the Beatles of Morocco," "the Moroccan Rolling Stones" or "the Bob Dylans"), similarly to Izza's, features a man in conversation with the tea tray:

community and context for memory, elder Muslim women in one village told me they needed to be carrying wood and feel its weight in order to remember the songs they sang when younger.

[28] See, for example, Hoffman on "exogamous marriage customs" for Muslim women of Tashelhit-speaking regions (Hoffman 2002:511).

[29] The phenomenon of women being newcomers to a village is so common that "*Is-tmyart*?" (Tashelhit, "Have you gotten used to it?") is commonly asked particularly by women of women, as it was of me daily, as a greeting.

[30] Elmedlaoui and Azaryahu (2008) discuss the phenomenon of Jews in Israel preserving Berber songs no longer sung in Morocco. Chetrit writes of a similar phenomenon of Jewish women in Morocco preserving songs after they had disappeared from Muslim women's traditions (Chetrit 2007:38n59).

[31] I am grateful to Abderrahmane Lakhsassi for bringing this song to my attention.

[32] As mentioned earlier, the terms "tray" and "table" are interchangeable, since traditional tables are like trays with short "legs."

Oh tray

Oh regret, regret!

What is wrong with my glass of tea, sad
among all the happy glasses?

What is the matter with my own glass, lost
in thought, lost, extending its sadness to me?[33]

Sung in Moroccan Arabic (unusual in the 1970s, as popular Arabic singers still tended to sing in either Classical or Egyptian Arabic), many of Nass el Ghiwane's songs draw on old poems and proverbs. Their style, which they named *shaabi* (folk music), was innovative for its time. In a 2003 conversation with author Elias Muhanna,[34] the leader of Nass el Ghiwane Omar Sayyed explained:

> Our parents spoke in a dialect, a vernacular that was very poetic. It was creative and complicated, and they had learned it from their parents... .Most of our songs are written in that language, and we incorporated a lot of the images from the old proverbs... .And we drew heavily from the poetry of the Amazighen, the Berbers.[35] (Sayyed to Muhanna 2003:143)

Muhanna asked Sayyed about the story of "borrowing" behind their song, "Essiniya," to which Sayyed responded:

> Well, there was a man.. .who used to sit and sing in the street, begging for alms. He had been all around Casablanca, singing a particular song— something about a tea tray.. .nobody really paid any attention to what he was saying, except for.. .La'arbi [who] took it, added some other verses and.. .our main singer.. .Boujmii' transformed it completely.... that was the beginning of our most famous song. (Sayyed to Muhanna 2003:144)

Both fans of Nass el Ghiwane and not-so-appreciative authorities imbued the song with all kinds of political meanings that Omar Sayyed claims in this interview were unintended.[36] Muhanna himself reads politics into the song, describing it as "stirring social commentary disguised as a conversation between a man and his tea tray."

The power of both Nass el Ghiwane's and Izza's songs lies in their ambiguity. The use of such coded symbols—metaphors whose subject remains unspecified—allows both singer and

[33] Excerpt translated from the Moroccan Arabic in Muhanna (2003:144).

[34] Elias Muhanna is a professor of Comparative Literature at Brown and scholar of classical Arabic literature and Islamic intellectual history.

[35] "In fact, as A. Roux has pointed out, this reflects a long-standing practice of mixed Arabic-Tamazight poetry; *cf.* M. Peyron (2004:196-197)." (Peyron 2010:85n18).

[36] Sayyed adds that this was the case for many of their songs: "In the context of all the fear and paranoia at the time [the 1970s and 1980s are called "The Years of Lead" in Morocco for the extreme repression of the regime] it's inevitable that one might see a political agenda in our lyrics. But we never tried to write political songs. They were songs of protest, sure, but they were more than merely political" (Sayyed to Muhanna 2003:144).

listener to imagine songs to mean whatever they think fits. While the interpretations may vary, they do not necessarily cancel each other out, but allow for multiplicity of meaning. Ambiguity invites the listener to participate. Both the sexually-coded and the politically-coded symbolism point toward the songs being an art form that enables the crossing of taboo boundaries.

HANNA'S RETORT: CO-PRODUCTIONS OF DIFFERENCE

Like Izza, Hanna was a Jewish native of the Tifnout River Valley. She died in Morocco decades ago, and I heard about her from Yassin, a ninety-seven-year-old Muslim, and the patriarch of the house where I lodged in the village of Tagerst.[37] Across and upriver from Izza's village, Tagerst is nestled towards the high end of the Tifnout River where streams flowing down from the Atlas' highest peaks meet to form the river. Some of these peaks, in view from Tagerst, remain snow-tipped year-round.[38] The dense trees and foliage on the mountainsides lining the streams offered cover for bandits. Muslim elders explained that it was due to this danger that no Jews had actually lived in Tagerst, echoing the refrain I heard repeatedly that Jews always lived in "safe" areas, near centers of authority and away from "lawless" areas.[39] Jewish men, as traders or craftsmen, typically had more goods or money when traveling than did Muslim men, and so were more attractive targets for bandits.[40] Interestingly, Yassin's family, today the dominant one in Tagerst, were once "newcomers" to the region, and, as "outsiders," were made to live lower down the mountain slope, near the river which at the time was more dangerous, but where now the village's population is centered. This complicates the idea of insiders/outsiders being mapped onto the Muslim/Jewish binary.

However, Jews from villages downstream were in regular contact with Tagerst villagers. Jewish men came daily from elsewhere (and occasionally spent one or several nights) to set up their shops or workshops and sell their wares. An older Muslim woman described for me how Jewish men prayed inside Tagerst's mill.[41] As a child, she and other children would peer through cracks in the wooden door to watch them. The Jewish craftsmen made saddles, shoes, baskets, worked as tailors or welders, and were admired for their industriousness. In addition, they brought goods to the villages from far away. So integral were Jews to this circulation of products, that a Saturday weekly market was a rarity in the Atlas, even half-a-century after the

[37] I had been "introduced" to Tagerst and Yassin by an American Jewish friend who lived there when serving in the Peace Corps fifteen years prior, and who has maintained his relationships with the villagers during his ongoing development work in the Atlas Mountains. I was therefore not the first Jew to live in Tagerst, but perhaps only the second.

I found it hard to believe that Yassin was truly ninety-seven. He was tall and thin, and stood very straight. He still rode his donkey and was active with all the necessities of running a household that also functions seasonally as an inn for trekkers to and from the Atlas Mountains' highest peaks. When I expressed amazement at his age, he pulled a fold of skin up on his forearm to show how it stayed (i.e. that it had lost its elasticity).

[38] The area is extraordinarily beautiful, or "*ishwa*one of the first words I learned upon arriving.

[39] As noted earlier, these same Jewish communities in Israel were typically settled by the government in what were considered dangerous and undesirable zones, and, as elsewhere, on the ruins of Palestinian towns or villages whose residents had been forced out during the war of 1948.

[40] How often this actually happened is not clear. Gottreich (2006) and Kenbib (1994) both cite cases of false claims of robbery. I heard a few stories of robberies or attempted ones from my Jewish narrators, usually thwarted by miraculous or supernatural intervention.

[41] Observant Jews pray three times a day; observant Muslims pray five times.

Jews' departure (the Jewish Sabbath was strictly observed in the Atlas). I was therefore surprised that a nearby village's weekly market-day was a Saturday. When I commented on this to Yassin, he explained that there had been no markets in the immediate region at all until after the Jews left. The nearest market at the time was in Agouim—a town three hours away by motorized vehicle today; however, Jewish merchants would bring provisions from there by donkeys, setting up makeshift markets on their rounds.[42]

The emphasis that every single Jewish man (and many women) had a trade of some sort and knew how to make something useful was consistent in interviews with Muslims everywhere in this valley. According to villagers today, when Jews left the region, no one knew how to make the products they had provided, creating a hardship for the Muslims who remained there.[43] Jews mostly traded their wares for grains and other such agricultural products; there was little exchange of actual money. Jews did not farm or own land in this area.[44] Relationships between Jews and Muslims of the different villages could be very close. For example, Yassin's older brother, who had been the local ruler *(amghar,* in Berber), had a close friendship with a Jewish man in Tayyurt. Yassin told me, "My brother was often with him. He was like his advisor."[45]

Yassin, however, liked to talk to me about Hanna, a Jewish woman, who would come often to Tagerst from a neighboring village, which is an hour-and-a-half walk away (still considered close by local standards). Widowed at a young age, she made her living baking bread for special occasions in villages throughout the river valley. Hers was simply the best, Yassin explained. "Whenever there was a wedding, she would be asked to come bake the bread.. .She would come alone and stay here [meaning in his home], just like you." The round earthen oven she used still stands in the open square next to his house, although the top has since been reinforced with concrete. Yassin also mentioned that Hanna, as well as her daughter, who sometimes accompanied her, ate "everything" (meaning non-kosher food, and again implying "just like you" since he knew I was Jewish yet did not keep kosher[46]). He added that she would never eat non-kosher food in her village, that is, in front of other Jews. Most Atlas Mountain Jews kept the strict dietary rules of *kashrut,* so food itself was a constant reminder of religious demarcation

[42] Jews' role in the market economy is reflected in a common saying that emerged among Muslims for describing a temporary absence of Jews, 'There's no salt in the market," as one of my interlocutors explained to me:

> There were very, very few Saturday markets. And if there were a holiday of ours, then Jews would not go to market that day. On those days the people [Muslims] going to the market would say, "There's no salt in the suq." That is to say, there's no taste to the market when the Jews aren't there. Even today the Arabs say that: "There's no salt in the suq, the Jews are gone." They say, "Now that the Jews have left, it isn't as good as it used to be."

This is also why it is very likely Jews would have introduced the products and utensils for tea to the region, as was mentioned in the discussion "Izza's song."

[43] The influx of cheap manufactured foreign goods took longer than elsewhere to be available in this valley's markets (and still are not very available in Yassin's village; when I was there, there were two tiny shops carrying mostly manufactured sweets and sodas, candles, lighters, batteries, but no toothpaste!

[44] Jews in general did not farm in the Atlas—Ulad Mansur was an exception (see Schroeter 2011)—but often did own land, which Muslims would work for them either for pay or more often in exchange for shares in crops. We will see how the oral traditions play on differences in types of work between Jews and Muslims in the next chapter.

[45] Jew as advisor to a Muslim leader is an aspect of political life that appears in Berber folklore (and beyond), reflecting both an historical and a contemporary reality. This will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

[46] Because of Muslim elders' pervasive knowledge of Jewish dietary restrictions, my eating their meat was often commented upon. A Muslim interlocutor in Taliouine jokingly (I think) said that I must not really be Jewish.

between Jewish and Muslim neighbors, friends, or co-workers.[47] This is reflected in the frequency with which these same Muslims fifty years later enhance their reminiscences with details of what Jews were and were not able to eat and drink at their homes — such as eggs, olives, bread, olive oil, buttermilk—as well as of special Jewish foods. Bread, a daily staple, was therefore a significant shared foodstuff between Jews and Muslims.[48] By eating the forbidden food of her neighbors, Hanna crossed the boundaries set by her own religious community (her daughter was to make a complete "transgression"— according to Jews but not Muslims—by converting to Islam and marrying a Muslim).

Yassin recalled the occasion of an *ahwash*, the traditional Berber communal dance introduced in Chapter Two, and an exchange that took place between Hanna and a Muslim man in the form of a sung poetry duel, a type of impromptu performance that often accompanied the *ahwash.* As noted in Chapter Two, such duels and the accompanying *ahwash* were among the most significant cultural practices shared by Jews and Muslims in the Berber-speaking villages of Morocco's Atlas Mountains. Before I analyze the exchange, I will make a few general comments about both the *ahwash* and the poetry duel in order to contextualize the exchange.

Ahwash is the overarching term used in the southwest High Atlas and northwest Anti-Atlas (i.e. in the region where the Tashelhit dialect of the Berber language is spoken) for a variety of communal dances that accompany all types of celebration, including rites of passage such as weddings and circumcisions. While the verbal form means "to dance," the term *ahwash* by extension refers to the entire celebration that includes singing and music. As ethnomusicologist Philip Schuyler describes:

> Village music.. .can be divided into a number of genres and styles too numerous to examine. The epitome of village music, however, is the ahwash (lit.: dance), which is found in one form or another all over the High Atlas and Sus. The details of performance vary from village to village, but in general the ahwash is sung and danced by two large antiphonal choruses [which might be one line of men and one of women], accompanied by an ensemble of frame drums *(tallunt,* pl.: *tilluna;* Arabic, *bendir).* The performance emphasizes successively improvised poetry, choral song, dance, and drumming. (Schuyler 1979:66)[49]

The *ahwash* is performed in public, in the village square. Villagers of all ages attend, and both men and women might dance. Schuyler notes: "An *ahwash* requires large numbers of participants—no fewer than twenty for a respectable performance, and up to one hundred and fifty dancers for a truly successful one" (1979:71). Traditionally, neither the dancers nor

[47]Yassin also told me of a rabbi from another village—and responsible for the ritual slaughter of meat for his Jewish community—who also, when in Tayyurt, would eat "everything."

[48] While bread was a common denominator, it could also serve as an expression of difference. To differentiate the (holy) Sabbath from the rest of the (profane) week, Jewish women baked special bread. In these regions, what made it special was a slower baking process, allowing for more water to be kneaded into it and lending it a moister, chewier texture. (Since bread was baked daily, both the preparation and baking had to be quick for both Jewish and Muslim women.) In other regions, this meant using wheat flour rather than barley (wheat is harder to grow in these regions where rainfall is uncertain, and therefore bread baked from it is considered special) (oral testimonies). Muslim informants often mentioned the tastiness of "Jewish" bread, referring, I believe, to these Sabbath breads.

[49] Both men and women play the drums, although the occasions might differ.

musicians were professional.[50] However, recent decades have seen the proliferation of commercial groups and performances at the same time that the traditional local practice has substantially diminished.

When Jews still lived in the Atlas, the *ahwash* might also consist of Jewish and Muslim participants, or they might attend each other's performances as spectators. The village square was usually shared by both Jews and Muslims, but even where the Jewish quarter was set apart and had its own space for dances, there might still be mixed *ahwash* groups (in Ihukaren in the Taliouine region, for example, there was an *ahwash* music band of Muslim and Jewish men, led by a Jewish man[51]). Although the *ahwash* may have been part of festivities accompanying a religious holiday, in itself the *ahwash* was non-sectarian. Speaking of the past, a Muslim woman told me, "An *'ayd* [Arabic, religious holiday] went by, another 'ayd followed, but *ahwash* has always blossomed."

While poetry duels, or sung verbal sparring, did not necessarily accompany an *ahwash,* they were considered an asset to its entertainment value and an important part of "what makes a good *ahwash"* (Elmedlaoui person communication).[52] "For the people of the countryside, it's the sung dialogue that is the most appreciated part [of the ahwash] and the most difficult to succeed at" (Jouad 1997, my translation). These sung poetry duels were a prevalent and highly developed form of Berber oral tradition.[53] In the Atlas Mountains, poetry duels served to voice and defuse (if only temporarily) inter-(or intra) communal tensions—whether due to tribal, village, religious, or gender differences. An *ahwash* was generally part of wedding festivities (which took place over the course of a week or so for both Muslims and Jews) — as was likely the case for "Hanna's song"—and, as mentioned earlier, marriages often joined families of different villages or tribes that might be experiencing ongoing tension or conflict.[54]

In order to perform in a public sung duel, the improvising poet had to be adept at the rhythm and rhyme schemes,[55] as well as in the tropes of the genre. Participants had to have the ability to improvise with wit and spontaneity while keeping to the constraints of the form. Spontaneously, a poet might start singing and the dancing would stop. Another poet might pick up the challenge, answering the first with a new challenge. Or the first poet might target the

[50] For a discussion of the difference between professional and amateur musicians in the Atlas, see Schuyler's article discussing it, in which he writes, "A performance by professional musicians can never have quite the emotional impact of a good ahwash" (Schuyler 1979:73).

[51] Recounted to me by the grandson of the band leader.

[52] Poetry duels also took place outside of *ahwash,* that is, they weren't always staged in a public forum. Yet some of these have also made it into the collective memory. Poetry duels also occurred in women-only gatherings such as preparing the bride before a wedding (both Jewish and Muslim). In Tifnout I was told that youth still express attraction in dueled couplets when passing on the path or at the occasion of a communal dance *(ahwash).*

[53] I write this in the past tense since the duels I discuss took place in the past and their performance appears to have diminished substantially today.

[54] Up until Moroccan Independence from France in 1956 somewhat unified and pacified the country, hostilities between tribes and/or villages often flared up (surpassing any tensions between Jews and Muslims), particularly over scarce resources, such as water and grazing rights. The French colonial administration had exacerbated these conflicts, in particular by pitting the anti-nationalist Glawa tribe against tribes resisting French occupation and/or the brutal Glawa ruler. As mentioned in Chapter One, Jews did not form tribes of their own, but aligned themselves with Muslim tribes, while also typically maintaining neutrality (although I did hear of some cases where they took up arms in support of their patron tribe, or otherwise get caught up in the conflicts).

Of course, tensions were not always contained, as we shall see in Chapter Five.

[55] "The rhyme in Berber poetry, unlike in Arabic poetry, is rather internal" (Lakhsassi, written communication).

attack more specifically, as in the example remembered by Y assin. The verses would be punctuated by drumming (Jouad 1997), and the poetic exchanges characteristically progressed from conflict to reconciliation (Lakhsassi 2008). Then someone might introduce a musical phrase or a chorus refrain and the dancing would start up again.

My interlocutors typically remembered only extracts from longer duels, containing a provocation and its retort, which also represented a sort of reconciliation, as in Yassin's reminiscence. Thus, what the interlocutors often remembered were the lines that encapsulate the longer exchange, that contain the essence of the performance for the person reminiscing. So, now let us return to Hanna and her song/retort.

Interplay between Difference and Affinity

The occasion Yassin remembered was an *ahwash* in Tagerst, which was likely part of the wedding festivities for which Hanna had been hired to bake bread. Following is Yassin's account of the poetic exchange that took place between Hanna and one of the Muslim men dancing in the row of male dancers (men and women danced in separate lines):

> Hanna was standing behind the women dancing, watching.
> A Muslim man asked her [in song]:
> > "Hanna, is happiness on your right
> > that you are observing the shoulder of your *lalla*[56]*?*
>
> Hanna responded:
> > "Religion is divided by my God,
> > But for happy occasions we come together."

On the face of it, the Muslim man's taunt and Hanna's retort seem disconnected. The man appears to be teasing her for copying, or seeking to learn from, the Muslim woman's dance moves (in Berber dances, shoulder movements are the most prominent—and difficult for the non-initiated!). My research assistant explained to me that "happiness on your right" means being at the peak of happiness, that is, extremely happy, just as "left" connotes unhappiness, as we saw in the discussion in Izza's song of the line "the server is on the left."[57] Despite the prime importance of the sung duel for the ahwash, dance was also important. For my female Jewish interlocutors, the dancing is what they remember with fondness and nostalgia, rather than the dueling.[58] My Muslim interlocutors (particularly the men) reminisce admiringly about Jewish women dancing. In fact, Elmedlaoui included in his list of what made for a good ahwash (from his own childhood memories): "A good dance by Jewish women." One of my Muslim male interlocutors in the Taliouine region told me: *"Taskaktino* [fem. "my Jew"][59] Sarah, when there was an *ahwash*, the Jewish Berber women were always well dressed; they sing well in Berber, you wouldn't know they were Jewish. They dance until dawn."

[56] The Berber term (which has been adopted into Moroccan Arabic) is a term and respect and can mean, "lady," "mistress," or "elder sister." Its various connotations will be discussed later in the analysis of the song.
[57] As in many cultures, in Morocco the right hand is associated with purity, the left hand impurity.
[58] DVDs of weddings (meaning the *ahwash),* even Muslim ones, are popular among my interlocutors now residing in Israel, and were commonly requested of me to bring from Morocco.
[59] This term, which is the Tashelhit dialect of Berber, will be discussed in Chapter Four.

However, Hanna's retort, "Religion is divided by my God, but for happy occasions we come together," was not a direct response to the man's accusation of her trying to copy the Muslim woman's dance. But, because her response implied that there was no religion in the ahwash, Hanna acknowledged that the male poet was not only—or actually-accusing her of copying, but taunting her being different. Hanna responded to this implication of her difference as a Jew (and perhaps also as a woman and an outsider to the village). Although the man did not mention religion, Hanna's answer showed that she understood it that way, in a metaphorical system where "right" meant belonging to Islam (the correct religion), and "left" to Judaism (the wrong religion, just as it was the wrong side in Izza's song). Hanna's response is diplomatic, universalizing what might have been taken as a personal attack. It also shows knowledge of shared poetic codes.

In Yassin's reminiscence of Hanna's song, we see the interplay of difference and affinity—or even intimacy—between Muslim and Jew, a theme that runs throughout the oral traditions and reminiscences (and this dissertation). This can be seen in the use, or lack of use, of names. On the one hand, the Muslim man's use of the term "your lalla," implying "your superior," to identify the Muslim woman whom Hanna is presumably watching reminds Hanna of her position in the social hierarchy in which Jews are to show deference to Muslims.[60] Lalla—meaning "lady," "mistress," or "madam"—is generally used as a title of respect. Of Berber origin, it is also used in Moroccan Arabic, and for the women of the royal family, and as a religious term for female saints. It is the counterpart to the masculine *Sidi* (Arabic for "sir," often abbreviated as Si). However, it is also used to signal closeness between women (it is used affectionately between female friends in contemporary urban usage). Muslim Berbers for whom I played the recording interpreted it variously on a spectrum from the abasing "the one who is better than you" to the intimate "elder sister," the latter implying both respect and familiarity. Or, the fact that the male poet said, **"**lallam," that is, *"your* mistress," might mean he was referring to the woman who had hired her to back the bread. Jews also use *lalla* among themselves; for example, a younger sister would say it to an older sister, as respect. Here again, as in Izza's song, ambiguity allows the audience their own interpretation. Notably, Hanna is the only person Yassin named in the story, suggesting a certain intimacy, and indeed, he always spoke of her with great affection. And the unnamed Muslim poet in the anecdote also addresses Hanna by name (in Yassin's telling), intimating familiarity, as opposed to the impersonal *lalla* used for the Muslim female dancer.

Intertextuality, and Variations on a Theme

As a lone Jewish woman among Muslims, as an outsider to the village, and as a woman responding to a Muslim man's challenge in a public form—Hanna crossed several boundaries. Yet, as the Muslim poet reminds her by his taunt, she has not been totally accepted by the other side, but rather occupies a liminal zone. In the scene of the poetry duel, Hanna literally stands at the margins, outside the dancers' circle. Yet, as a widow, temporarily separated geographically from her own religious community's codes of behavior (for example, as mentioned earlier regarding her breaking the rules of *kashrut),* Hanna's marginality allowed her a certain freedom of agency. Hanna's very liminality also allows for erasure of "hierarchical separations" (Zavala

[60] Language use reflecting the ways in which Jews were lower in the social hierarchy of the Islamic society will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

1997:9). But it is the framework of the poetry duel and her competence as a poetic rival in particular that allowed her to challenge the various boundaries (of social hierarchy, gender, religion, village).[61] Through her sung retort—both in form as well as content—Hanna asserts herself as a worthy participant. As Rovsing Olsen writes of the sung duels, "Indeed, speaking in public during an ahwash, that is, singing solo, is an important act that isn't given to just anyone. If in the Atlas the music or dance is collectively performed, the poet-singer's performance is generally limited to only a few" (Rovsing Olsen 1997:28-29, my translation).. Furthermore, Hanna's very participation is an act of community and even bespeaks a certain stature she holds in it. As Hoffman writes of poet-singers of the same region: "Actors' words are embedded in social relations, and performers must master local rules of decorum. Successful performance requires 'knowing one's way around'" (Hoffman 2002:525).[62]

Hanna's use of intertextuality in the poetic exchange reveals the ways in which Hanna displays her competence and assumes agency by appropriating authority from the Muslim poet's words, as well as those of others (for example, Kapchan 1996:73). In this exchange we see the "two kinds of intertextuality" described by ethnomusicologist Steven Feld as "performanceinternal and cross-performance" (Feld 1990:251). Of performance-internal intertextuality, Bauman writes that playing with the "source utterance" is "a potent means of infusing the discourse with authority" (Bauman 2004:157), and of oral poetic traditions more generally: "Submission to the *form* of the source utterance has a concomitant effect on the rhetorical power of the text: upholding the integrity of the form opens the way to acceptance of the validity of the message" (Bauman 2004:153). For example, although Hanna's retort seems to be disconnected from the challenging verse (as noted earlier), she repeats the term "happiness," *l'frh—which* is also translated as "happy occasions. That is, her response implies that she does not need to copy her Muslim elder for her happiness, but has a right to share in the happy occasion in her own right.

While not a direct use of intertextuality, Hanna's invocation of "God" ("Religion is divided by my God") is another means by which she invokes authority. What Kapchan writes of a woman vendor in the rural Moroccan marketplace is apt for Hanna: "Authority is God's, she implies, but this assertion is precisely the one that effects and actualizes her own authoritative voice" (Kapchan 1996:90-91). Hanna's use of the term, *"rebbi"* for my God (literally, "my Lord," and used commonly in Berber by both Muslims and Jews) also points to the most crucial commonality between Judaism and Islam. Even though God divided Jews and Muslims by religion, this is the same God for both—that is, all—peoples. (Interestingly, most Muslim Berbers interpreted her use of "rebbi" as "our God.")

Hanna very likely did not make up her response, but rather drew upon a known repertoire. In Berber poetry duels, poets improvise, yet they also exploit known—and accepted— expressions, drawing upon a cross-performance intertextuality. Performances were thus a mix of improvisation and established phrasings (this combination of the familiar with an element of wit

[61] What Deborah Kapchan writes of the function of the rural Moroccan marketplace seems to apply to the *ahwash* as "festive 'time out of time'" (Kapchan1996:42), in which "relations of social hierarchy are equalized if not actually inverted" (Kapchan 1996:47). And poetry duels are similar to bargaining in that "social identities are constantly negotiated and rhetorically redefined" (Kapchan 1996:51).

[62] "The closer the poets, the more similar their training, the better they will be able to anticipate and build on each other's turns," as Nadia Yaqub writes of Palestinian poetry duels (which are still performed at weddings today) (Yaqub 1999:165).

and surprise is an ideal audience pleaser). For example, I heard very similar phrasing to Hanna's retort, "Religion is divided by my God, but for happy occasions we come together," from several Muslim interlocutors over a wide geographic area, always recounted as a Jewish response to a variety of different one-line provocations by Muslims. The two instances I present here were both provided by interlocutors too young to have known Atlas Jews themselves, but who had heard the exchanges from their elders, and recited them to me without my having mentioned Hanna's exchange. One example was reported to me by a fifty-something Muslim man (originally from a village several hours' drive to the south of Tifnout), who had not witnessed the performance himself, nor even known any Jews, but had heard the exchange as recounted by his elders:

> The Jews wanted to do the *ahwash* with the Muslims.
> The Muslims sang to them:
> > "Separate your *ahwash* from ours."
>
> A Jew sang back to them:
> > "As for religion, God has already separated us,
> > But for happy occasions we can be together."

In this example, the response links directly to the provocation, repeating the word "separation." The intertextuality—that is, the known use of familiar phrasing-may also help explain why Hanna understood her provoker to be insinuating her difference of religion them indirectly in his provocation that was seemingly unrelated to religion.

In another example, Rashida, a twenty-year-old resident of Tagerst, told me of a sung duel that her grandfather had recounted to her. Might it have been a rendition of the occasion Y assin recounted, or perhaps a song about it? Rashida described the exchange as follows:

> A Muslim man sang:
> > "One bouquet[63] standing on the edge is hurt in the public place,
> > God! —Who was that standing on the edge?"
>
> A Jewish man sang in response:
> > "People are the same, only the evil heart splits them away,
> > Fingers in the right hand are equally the same,
> > God has made different religions; we want to share happy occasions."

Again we see the "right" invoked metaphorically as "good," opposed perhaps to the "evil" in the preceding line. Rashida recited this poetry duel for me the first time we met, after I had described the type of research I hoped to be doing. She recited it as an example of how growing up hearing her grandparents tell about their former Jewish neighbors as an integral part of their stories about the past. In fact, these two examples represent the transmission of these sung duels not only to an American Jewish researcher (me), but also from the older generation of Muslims, who lived with Jews, to the younger ones, who did not.

The Berber word *tadla* literally means "bouquet," but is also used for describing a beautiful woman.

Hanna's use of intertextuality not only revealed her competence as a performer, but may have also given her equal stature to her rival. "To decontextualize and recontextualize a text is thus an act of control, and in regard to the differential exercise of such control the issue of social power arises" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:76). By her response she was in dialogue with previous texts.[64]

The similarity of couplets or song fragments remembered over a large geographic expanse suggests somewhat widespread performances of such songs in the past.[65] Hanna's use of the more-than-likely known response also transformed the personal interaction into a universal one, as mentioned earlier. The unnamed male poet's challenge was personal; Hanna's response was general. It was also a gesture of affinity with the audience. As Kapchan writes of the female vendor's oratory in the rural Moroccan marketplace, "In deploying these stock phrases the majduba establishes a mainstream credibility with her audience" (Kapchan 1996:90).

A Final Note on the Function of the Poetry Duels

Anthropologist Donald Brenneis concludes from his international survey of verbal duels that there is often a "distinction between effect and intent": that is, some cultures privilege a "focus on the process and textures," over concern for an outcome; others the reverse; and others still combine both (Brenneis 1980:179). Yet, whatever the primary concern, he also found that "artistry and entertainment are more important concerns than personal conflict" (Brenneis 1980:179). Indeed, for the poetic sparring between Jews and Muslims, the focus seemed to be less on the outcome than on the performance. While it remained a contest of wits, there was no "resolution" that actually changed relations, nor was that the intent. Instead, there was a return to the status quo. And, although a poetry duel would end in reconciliation, this might last only until the next meeting, or the next ahwash, for the rivalry was ever ongoing (Lakhsassi 2008). Indeed, in their reminiscences, Muslim interlocutors emphasize appreciation of and amusement at witty retorts—whether by Jewish or Muslim poets—rather than any particular outcome.[66] Furthermore, as illustrated by Hanna's response, the point in the poetic contest is not to deny the other's claim—as in not dignifying it with a response—but to "top" it. In fact, this appreciation of wit over outcome is characteristic of Berber folktales.[67] Finally, the function of the duels goes beyond entertainment, as I think is evident in the poignancy of the lines remembered and circulated by Muslim villagers so many decades after they were sung by their former Jewish neighbors. These remembered fragments confirm the purpose of a song as Schuyler observes it,

[64] This follows what Bakhtin refers to as engaging with "prior discourse" (Bakhtin 1981:342). And that "the text lives only by coming into contact with another text (with context) ... We emphasize that this contact is a dialogic contact between texts" (Bakhtin 1986:162).

[65] The similar responses to a variety of provocations also illustrate what Bauman and Briggs write of poetics in performances: "Decontextualization from one context must involve recontextualization in another, which is to recognize the potential for texts to circulate, to be spoken again in another context" (1990:74). And also, "The chain of linkages may be extended without temporal limit, for texts may be continuously decentered and recentered. At one level, this illuminates the process of traditionalization, the telling and retelling. as these recenterings are part of the symbolic construction of discursive continuity with a meaningful past" (1990:77-78).

[66] Appreciation of wit (often of the weak over the strong) rather than focus on a victor is typical of Berber oral traditions (including folktales and jokes) in general. See Levin (2007).

[67] As Annick Zennaki writes: "The structure. which opposes one ruse to a ruse-and-a-half pervades Berber oral traditions" (2000:258; my translation). See also Leguil (2000:19).

“Among the Ishlhin [Berbers of the region I worked in], a song is not meant to be mere entertainment. Rather, it should contain a message, either a lesson about human nature and life in general, a commentary on a specific situation, or both” (Schuyler 1979:71).

Co-Productions of Difference

Poetry duels such as these emerged directly from intercommunal tensions. They issued from the complex and diverse intercommunal life in which maintaining religious boundaries involved constant negotiation of closeness and separation, an intricate—and sometimes tense- dance between sharing and distancing. I name these jointly shared and produced Jewish and Muslim oral traditions “co-productions.” The collaborative aspect of the contests, as well as their multivocality, puts them in dialogue with the past, and in dialogue with the present (through, for example, Yassin’s interpretation and recounting of Hanna’s retort). What Stephen Feld writes about the intertextual nature of the lament forms of the Kaluli (of Papua New Guinea) lament forms (drawing upon, yet differentiating in his application of, Bakhtin’s intertextuality), is an apt description of this process among Muslims and Jews. He uses “‘intertextual’ descriptively to mean a discourse relationship where the spatio-temporal character of multiple voice utterances is indexical to a process of emergence as a cohesive text. It is the jointly produced, collaborative quality of Kaluli multiply-voiced texts, implicating a particular kind of leaderless, egalitarian, and participatory relationship ... It is the cumulatively ‘layered’ and interactive dynamic of the jointly produced text” (Feld 1990:247).

Thus, poetry duels can be argued to have served to express difference and affiliation at one and the same time, for “poets need to have internalized the same tradition in order to build on each other’s composition and create a single work in unison,” as Nadia Y aqub writes of Palestinian poetry duels (Yaqub 1999:165). Hanna’s participation in the sung duel from the margins of the *ahwash* is a literal enactment of the tension between separation and togetherness of Jews and Muslims.

CONCLUSION

This chapter continued to address the question begun in Chapter Two of Jewish participation in Berber cultural traditions (and its place in memory of both Jews and Muslims), both theoretically and literally. Both women’s songs were embedded in and issued from rich cultural worlds. In the discussion of Izza and her song, we explored the various boundary-crossings of its shared poetic codes that illustrate cultural affinity between Jews and Muslims and reflect a dynamic and ongoing cultural interchange, not only between Jews and Muslims, but all facets of Moroccan society. In the story of Hanna and her song, the boundary-crossing was acted out in the ongoing negotiation between differentiation and affinity between Jews and Muslims.

Both songs are poetic expressions of tensions at the boundaries: gender in Izza’s, and gender, religion, village identity (outsider/insider) in Hanna’s. While each song deals with a type of inter-relational tension between a man and a woman, “Hanna’s song” reinscribes the binary opposition between Muslim and Jew as that of a male/female power dynamic.

To revisit the parallels and contrasts between Izza’s and Hanna’s stories and “their” songs: both women were Jewish and came from small villages in the High Atlas Tifnout River Valley.
Y et, their circumstances were quite different. Izza’s husband did not allow her to sing in public,

so she only sang in the privacy of her home. Hanna was widowed at a young age and seemingly enjoyed a certain degree of independence and freedom, singing in public as the only Jew among Muslims. Izza lived the majority of her life in Israel, whereas Hanna died before the mass emigration of her community to Israel.

In this chapter we see songs as an art form that enables the crossing of taboos. Both songs express sentiments and tensions in aesthetically coded ways that might not otherwise be acceptable in normal conversation, whether at the time that is being remembered, or at the moment of remembering. They show how women crossed symbolic boundaries in songs when not able do so to otherwise (as a result of social taboos). Izza only does so in song (and the songs themselves do, as we saw in the discussions of both women's songs), whereas Hanna does so literally in her life. In this way, both songs highlight female agency, however limited or temporal. Both songs are sites of defiance, whether discreet or more overt. However, this challenging of boundaries through oral traditions is circumscribed by what is culturally determined as acceptable. Through such songs, one can express longings and sites of resistance — "discourses of defiance" as Abu-Lughod calls them (1986:185). In particular for the Berbers of the southwest High Atlas and Anti-Atlas Mountains (i.e. Ishelhin, or Berbers speaking the Tashelhit dialect), Katherine Hoffman writes that "community song serves as a discursive medium for expressing.. .social conflict in ways that Ishelhin consider unacceptable in conversation speech" (Hoffman 2002:510). More generally, Brenneis writes that "anthropologists and folklorists have long argued that one major function of traditional performances is the expression they allow to sensitive or otherwise prohibited thoughts and concerns . The conventional nature of such performances helps the audience to anticipate their course and provides clues to guide their interpretation" (Brenneis 1980:171).

In the following chapters, I continue to examine the interplay in the oral traditions and reminiscences of the two aspects that one might argue are part of all human relationships: the need to differentiate versus the pull toward affinity.

CHAPTER FOUR

La poétique des insultes et du badinage : Travail et rencontres quotidiennes

Non-Jews [Muslims] call Jews:
hell's henchmen; bull worshippers; dogs; water
spitters; the burned; mosquitos.
Jews insult Muslims by saying to them:
May God annihilate your name;
Ben l'mamzer (son of the bastard).[1] * * *

Jews and non-Jews of the same station receive one another.
They do favors for each other. They have good neighborly relations. One cannot live
without the other.
— Captain Bontoux (1951:6,12, my translation)

INTRODUCTION

The observations in the epigraph were recorded in a French colonial captain's fourteen- page report on the Jewish communities of the Taliouine region in Morocco's Anti-Atlas Mountains.[2] These seemingly contradictory remarks match those I often encountered in my fieldwork in both Morocco and Israel and characterize the paradoxical intercommunal relations between Muslims and Jews.

[1] These two Jewish insult/curses are from Hebrew, and commonly used among Hebrew-speaking Jews. *Ma simu* ("May God annihilate your name") is either a Judeo-Berber version of the Hebrew, or Bontoux's misunderstanding of the Hebrew, *yimah sh'mo.* It is a Hebrew idiom, commonly used today in Israel to speak of an enemy; children also use it in fighting with each other. The expression, "may he be annihilated" is also the figurative meaning of the *Haketiya* (Moroccan Judeo-Spanish) curse, *"No le/la quede jder ni jeddara*" (lit., May he/she be without origins or father or family), usually spoken by one Jew about another not present (according to a Moroccan Jewish speaker of *Haketiya,* personal communication).

I will discuss some of the other insults in the epigraph, as they come up in my interlocutor's speech.

[2] This report is part of a series of reports by French captains throughout colonial Morocco on the Jewish populations. It is unclear whether these reports were solicited by the colonial administration, or personally by Pierre Flamand. (I received access to them through Elias Harrus, who had them in his personal collection. Harrus had been director of the Alliance Israélite Universelle school system in Morocco and a close friend of Flamand.) Flamand was inspector for the network of the French colonial administration's schools in Morocco in the late 1940s and early 1950s, during which time he also carried out ethnographic research on the Jewish communities of the Atlas Mountains, which became his doctoral thesis, *Diaspora en Terre d'Islam: Les communautés israélite du sud marocain.* While heavily flawed—Flamand spoke only French and seemed to have no knowledge of Judaism or Islam—it is the only work of its kind, and the reports, while varied in quality, are of value beyond Flamand's published work. For an excellent critique of Flamand and his work, see Kosansky 2003. It is not clear from the report whether Bontoux knew Berber or Moroccan Arabic or not, but his report is one of the more in-depth of the collection.

In this chapter, I focus on the free flow of insults and banter between Atlas Mountain Muslims and Jews as depicted as flowing freely in the course of daily, interpersonal interactions. The interview excerpts and anecdotes discussed here elucidate both the social and economic interdependence between Muslims and Jews as well as areas of difference in these spheres—that is, in social hierarchy, economic status, and types of occupations, rather than focusing on religion or religious difference, which the Chapter Five treats more specifically. The insults between Muslims and Jews reflect a spectrum of emotions from antagonism to affection, often simultaneously. Consequently, outsiders lacking knowledge of implicit cultural codes, or of the nature of these particular relationships, tend to take insults out of context, misunderstand them, or oversimplify them as evidence of entrenched hostility. In the past this was true of European anthropologists or travel writers (and particularly in French colonial discourse, which viewed relationships in light of European/Christian anti-Semitism, while at the same time projecting its own anti-Semitism).

In the present, such insults are often erroneously viewed through the screen of contemporary conflicts and bi-furcation of identities (Jew vs. Muslim/Arab). Outsiders to these communities, or younger generations who have not experienced the coexistence typically project anachronistically the "nationalization" of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict onto past relationships in Morocco. Thus, without an understanding of context, certain insults occurring in the anecdotes or uttered today by those reminiscing might be viewed as anti-Semitic tropes (when spoken by non- Jews), or as an instance of anti-Muslim or Arab virulence (when spoken by Jews). Yet, the period being remembered for the most part precedes those nationalized identities. Stories told by elder Muslims of Jews' cunning are reframed by some Muslim youth to confirm negative attitudes towards Jews whom they know only from the media, shown predominantly as Israeli soldiers killing Arabs.[3] Conversely, younger Muslims sometimes apologetically tried to explain away to me *any* hostility in such insults because of their embarrassment at their parents' use of them in front of me, again apparently without understanding the full range of emotion that they can express. For, although this dissertation focuses on the creative expression of difference between Berber Muslims and Jews, it is not claiming the absence of any hostilities. Finally, contemporary political conflicts do at times become mapped onto the views of the past by those reminiscing, interweaving present and past concerns, as we shall see.

This study is by no means a comprehensive look at the usage of insults between Jews and Muslims. The examples presented here probably do not cover the harshest of insults, as my interlocutors would likely have "protected" me from them. Nor are they as colorful as the ones in the epigraph, but rather, for the most part, more nuanced and subtle. In fact, it was very difficult to get narrators—either Jewish or Muslim—to speak of insults directly; questions about them were met with denial that they even existed. Certainly some of this had to do with politeness around me as an outsider and a woman (and for Muslims, as a Jew), as well as self-selection as to who would speak to me in the first place, as mentioned in Chapter Two. Furthermore, indirectness is characteristic of Berber oral culture (as seen in Chapter Three), as well as in Arab- Islamic (Feghali 1997) and Jewish (Matisoff 2000) discourses. However, certain themes recur with such consistency that examining examples of them in this chapter can provide insights into interpersonal relationships.

[3] For an insightful discussion of an example of this, see Boum 2007:467-90.

Context Is Everything

Part of the difficulty in soliciting and understanding insults in general is the lack of clarity as to what constitutes an insult. It is not a clear-cut category because insults can be ambiguous; context is, of course, everything. Insults can break relationships, or, as signs of affection, can strengthen them. There is often a fine or ambiguous line between what is deemed or experienced as humorous and/or permitted disrespect, and what is abuse. Linguistic anthropologist Judith Irvine described the difficulty this way: "The problem of whether an utterance is an insult is not only an investigator's problem, then, but inevitably a members' concern as well. For these reasons we shall never be able to collect a clearly bounded set of instances of verbal abuse" (Irvine 1993:110).[4] For this reason, I use a concept of insult that is very broad and runs a spectrum from offensive remarks to light banter and teasing, and can also include stereotypes.

Let's begin with a few comments on the general context and function of insults in Morocco's Atlas Mountains (some of which apply to Morocco in general). Anthropologist Katherine Hoffman noted from her fieldwork in the Anti-Atlas Mountains that "in the everyday speech of mountain dwellers, word play, irony, and sarcasm are commonplace" (Hoffman 2002:532). Irony and sarcasm are also common in Jewish discourse (Harshav 1990, Matisoff 2000). These characteristics are in evident in the use of insults we will examine. Additionally, as noted earlier, affection may also be implicated in insults, depending on the ever-important context. While calling an unrelated person a dog is one of the worst insults in Morocco (and can even be dangerous), parents use the same insult towards their children.[5] Parents in Moroccan parents commonly insult their children. Stefania Pandolfo suggests that insults are used in this way to express affection because passionate love cannot be directly expressed, both due to superstitions and moral codes (oral communication). Specifically, the superstition in order to avoid the evil eye that one cannot praise directly—and so resorts to insults instead, especially by parents to children—is true in Jewish cultures throughout the world, as well as throughout the Middle East. Of course, affectionate use of insults can be found in many cultures, depending on the context, and the relationship among the concerned parties. Such usage can even create bonds, and reflect a degree of comfort and safety.

For Jews and Muslims living together in the Atlas, a certain "normalization" of tensions played out verbally more often than erupting into full-on conflict. There was an ongoing and open rivalry between Muslims and Jews as to who were the true believers, with each crediting their own religion as superior, and holding a certain distain for the other's. This disdain played out in various ways, not always pertaining to religious differences, but also, for example, based on differences of types of work practiced by each group, as we will see.

For Atlas Muslims and Jews, in particular, I believe that insults served to both create distance and reinforce intimacy, thus reflecting the ambivalence in their relationships. The examination of their usage of insults illuminates the tension between the two pulls of separation

[4] Judith Irvine (1993, especially 109-111) suggests various factors contributing to the difficulty of collecting a corpus of insults, including difficulties in determining what is an insult due to context, ambiguities, and the sometimes sensitive nature of insults, etc. Irvine further notes that "verbal abuse involves evaluative statements grounded in specific cultural systems. Even with a detailed familiarity with cultural context, there can still be no hard-and-fast semantic criterion distinguishing statements that are abusive from statements that are not" (Irvine 1993:109).

[5] 'The equation of men with dogs is a shameful one in Morocco, as is their association with domestication" (Kapchan 1996:255).

and closeness both in the lives of Jewish and Muslim villagers of the past, as well as in their reminiscences of each other. Repartee, face-to-face insulting, between Muslims and Jews could actually be an indication of respect, comfort, and shared codes. Of course, humor was also a means of creating safe discursive space. Insults therefore were one tool in the negotiation of communal boundaries.

I have organized the examples discussed in this chapter into two categories, the first of which I call "Business Encounters: Oblique Insults," and the second, "Daily Encounters: Affectionate (or Nor) Subversions."

BUSINESS ENCOUNTERS: OBLIQUE INSULTS

The two anecdotes presented in this section demonstrate the use of indirect insulting or slighting in order to avoid directly confronting or antagonizing the other, while also involving subtle subversions of respect. The narrators, Haim and Khalid, both hail from the same Moroccan Tifnout River valley village, Igmir. Haim (whom we met in Chapter Two), was living in Israel when I met him; Khalid, a Muslim man, still lives in Igmir. Both men were in their early seventies when I spoke with them, and therefore had been children or young teenagers in 1950, the year that Haim left Igmir with his family for Israel.

Haim's Anecdote: *Udaynu* (My Jew)

Haim lived in the same *moshav* where many former natives of Tifnout have resided since their immigration to Israel over half a century ago. The *moshav* itself was established in 1955 for immigrants from North Africa, mostly (if not all) Moroccans.[6] This enabled its new inhabitants, as noted in Chapter Two, to keep up many Berber cultural traditions, such as the *ahwash*. Haim seemed to have an endless knowledge of stories and jokes in Berber, many of which he had heard from his grandmother (who never learned Arabic).

Haim spoke to me of nicknames (a prevalent use of insults)[7] commonly used as family names in Tifnout, and by which Muslim villagers often remember their former Jewish neighbors today.

> HAIM: Yes, there were nicknames. Our family was Ayt Bu-Ogho *[Haim's wife bursts into giggles]*. It means "the family of the owner of buttermilk." The parents of Sultana [Haim's sister-in-law] were Ayt Bu-Karid *[Haim laughs]*. It means "family of the owner of money." SARAH: I asked Sultana and other members of her family about that name and they said they didn't recognize it—
> HAIM: They won't tell you like I do. They'll say "Azulay," "Biton," "Ohana" [actual family names], like that.

[6] The *moshav* is located on the lands of the Palestinian village of 'Ajjur, whose residents had either fled during attacks or were expelled when it was captured by Israel in 1948 (Khalidi1992:207).

[7] Nicknames based on personal characteristics—typically playing on a weakness or defect, physical or otherwise—were common among both Jews and Muslims. Some entire villages also had/have nicknames.

Our conversation meandered through details and anecdotes about daily life. I asked Haim if his mother had gathered kindling for cooking in Morocco, as was typical of women and girls, both Jewish and Muslim. She had, which led him to talk about the forest near Igmir and a type of oak tree from whose acorns they made a porridge that he described as delicious with butter and herbs (the latter gathered from under the oaks). In fact, according to Haim, they ate a thin porridge (occasionally replaced by couscous) made from all types of grains for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, reflecting how poor his and other families were. "Only for Shabbat would there be meat," he told me. I asked if his family had chickens, which led him to talk about animals people owned, and to tell a story:

> We had chickens. There were others who also had a goat, or a sheep. For example, here's a joke—no, it's not a joke, it's the truth: there was a Jewish man, an expert in making those special saddles for animals. Important people [i.e. rich Muslim men] would have the saddles custom made. Jews were specialists in making them. So a Jewish expert used to make them for this Arab[8] guy who really liked to have his saddles well made, finely crafted, especially beautiful. And this Arab, he was rich. So every time he would say to him, the Jew to the Arab, "Do me a favor, give me a lamb for the Sabbath." He was ashamed before him. Meaning, the Arab was ashamed to say "no" to the Jew. But one day, he [the Muslim] was finally fed up. So he said to him, *"Udaynu," [Haim laughs],* "*Udaynu*," that means "my Jew," "my dear."[9] "I am sorry, but you have more Sabbaths than I have sheep!"
>
> That's the truth, that's how it was, I'm not just saying it.

In this anecdote, actual insults are absent, since *"Udaynu'"* (Berber, my Jew), can be seen as an ambivalent term. The Muslim, although fed up with the Jew, could or would not complain directly to him, but used indirect means to express his frustration and avoid confrontation. His complaint is masked in praise, as if he said to the Jewish man, "Y ou're richer in Sabbaths than I am in sheep."[10] On one hand, *Udaynu* expresses affection, "my dear," as Haim explained to me, going beyond direct translation to interpretation of the attitude encoded in the particular usage of the term. In this way, the use of *Udaynu* softens the address. The Muslim man's use of "my Jew" is also ironic. The fact that Haim explains it as "my dear," shows he understands it to be exasperation tempered by affection, a combination he found humorous. I have also heard *Udaynu* used in this same sense characterizing the address of a Jewish wife towards her husband—that is, suggesting both closeness and bottled anger—in jokes Muslims told me about

[8] Haim uses the term "Arab" for Muslims, even though Muslims in his native village were Berber. This is typical of Moroccan Jews in Israel, particularly when speaking in Hebrew (the different terms Jews and Muslims use for each other for the other often change depending on the language spoken). In Hebrew, there is often a conflation of Muslim and Arab (this happens in English also), perhaps due to an imposition of the nationalist dichotomy of "Jews versus Arabs." But of course, not all Arabs are Muslim, and most Muslims in the world are not Arab.

[9] Haim says this in a phrase mixing Arabic *(habib,* dear; lit. beloved) Hebrew *(sheli,* mine), while speaking in Hebrew to me *(habibi,* my dear, is commonly used by Hebrew-speaking Israelis).

[10] This also perhaps shows a subtle understanding on the part of the Muslim man of the "riches" that the Sabbath holds for observant Jews. For example, a Jewish saying claims, "I don't have any sheep but am rich in Sabbaths."

married Jewish couples.[11] In Haim's anecdote, it could be argued that the Muslim man's apology, "I'm sorry," softens the blow of couched refusal, opening the possibility for a laugh between friends.

On the other hand, *Udaynu* alludes to the dependence of Jews on Muslims. For, while the relationship between the Jew and the Muslim is one of craftsman-client, the use of the possessive evokes the Muslim/Jewish patron/client relationship of the tribal system of protection for Jews by Muslim families or tribes (mentioned in Chapter One).[12] The French ethnographer Pierre Flamand and other foreign observers (such as travel writers or members of the French colonial administration) took such expressions, "Our Jew(s)," "my Jew(s)" out of context, restricting them to a feudal serf-lord relationship, or even master-slave.[13] (Jews also use the possessive, "*our* Muslims," when speaking of their former neighbors in Morocco, as we will see later in this chapter.[14]) In actuality, relationships between Muslims and Jews were more complicated (than might be assumed for ruler/ruled, patron/client, and majority/minority) and the hierarchy vacillated, due to various factors such as wealth (class), who worked for whom, access to ruling administration, etc. As Boum writes of the tribal patron/client system, "Although this political situation might tell a story of economic and social exploitation, the relations that Jews ended up fostering with Muslim patrons through trading alliances translated into complex and ambivalent networks of friendship, protection, and interdependence" (Boum 2013:35). Jews almost always worked for themselves or sometimes for other Jews, and sometimes in partnership with Muslims. In the cases when they worked *for* Muslims, the latter were typically in a position of administrative authority, which also gave them a "social boost" above other Muslim villagers, as we shall see in the following chapter. More often than not, if Jews owned land, they hired Muslims to work it for them. Or, as in the case of Khalid's to follow, Jews were often the ones to have the capital to purchase livestock, the tending of which would be by Muslims, with whom they would share assets.

In fact, Haim's anecdote also reveals a disruption of the expected hierarchy. The wealthy Muslim, who is an "important" person and the customer, is the one who is "ashamed" before the Jew. He feels he cannot directly refuse the Jewish craftsman's request or complain about him taking advantage of their business association, perhaps due to his own wealth, and/or perhaps also in the sense that the Muslim is obligated to "protect" the Jew. This latter idea is ironic, given that the rite of formally asking for protection from a tribe involves an offer on the part of the one seeking protection of a sheep (or some sort of animal) to slaughter as a gift and to seal the deal. The Muslim's higher economic status (presumably) and relative position of power over the Jew may thus be why he was "ashamed" to refuse the poorer Jew, at least, as retold by a Jewish man,

[11] Suggestive of a certain intimacy in the past between Jews and Muslims, Muslim interlocutors (both male and female) delighted in recounting couplets of sung duels or jokes between Jewish husbands and wives. We will see one of these in Chapter Five.

[12] All Jewish families or weaker Berber tribes, "clients," were under the "patronage" of stronger tribes. Some elder Berber Muslims still today refer to former Jewish neighbors by their first name followed by Ayt so-and-so (the tribal affiliation). These relationships were often hereditary and engendered close relationships. For example, I was told of two incidents of Muslim journalists (one by the journalist herself) who traveled to Israel and were able to find the Jewish families their grandparents had "protected" and were given very warm and emotional welcomes.

[13] "Any Jew living among a tribe must accept the permanent protection of a Berber who treats him like a child or like a slave of his household" (Flamand 1957:54-55, my translation).

[14] I also experienced the use of the possessive "my Jew" as an expression of affection: as mentioned in Chapter Three, one of my Muslim interlocutors called me (affectionately, I believe), "*Taskaktino* [my Jew, fem.], Sarah."

Haim. The Muslim's shame also follows from the cultural ethics of hospitality and generosity regarding consumables.

Khalid's Anecdote: "What more do you want from God?"

The following excerpt is from Khalid, a Muslim man in his seventies who still lived in Igmir at the time of my fieldwork. His family happened to be neighbors of Haim's until Haim's family left in 1950. I had not been looking for Khalid in particular (even though Haim had mentioned Khalid's father by name as a kind and helpful neighbor) when I went to Igmir upon my return to Morocco from Israel, but my interest in Igmir was kindled by my visit with Haim in Israel and by the delightful stories he told. I had walked with my local research assistant from Tagerst, the village where I lodged in the Tifnout River valley, to Igmir (a little over an hour's walk). Following our usual pattern, when we got to the village we asked for the name of an elder who might remember something about the Jews who had once lived there. The first woman we encountered did not hesitate to give us a name—that of Khalid—and pointed out our direction, saying to ask for his house as we got closer (there are neither street names for the footpaths running between the buildings, nor numbers on the houses). Khalid and his wife were home, and welcomed us warmly, with tea and snacks. When I realized his last name (not a nickname) was the same one that Haim had mentioned who were his family's good friends, I asked him about Haim's family, the "Family of the Owners of Buttermilk." Khalid laughed, and later showed me Haim's family's former house, almost directly across the alleyway.

Over the course of our conversation, Khalid proceeded to tell a series of anecdotes that involved Jews insulting Muslims, as in the following, another case of indirectness in a business association:

> Another typical trade that Jewish men practice is that of sharing animals with the Berber.[15] A Jewish man might buy some animals from the market—sheep, cows, goats, or chickens—and gives what he buys to a Berber to look after this animal, but before doing this, they have would certain oral rules that should be respected. [For example] A Jewish man bought a cow for a [Muslim] woman to look after on the condition that she divide the butter and milk with him by half. She agreed, but it happened that she didn't bring him anything. He was waiting patiently, until one day she came dragging the cow with her and said; "Look, Jew, this is your cow, it gave me nothing." The Jew looked her up and down. She was wearing a dress covered with what she had been cooking [i.e. it was very dirty]. He [the Jew] said "What more do you want from God?" It's as if he was saying, "You have already been punished [referring to her piteous/bedraggled appearance as punishment for her cheating him out of the butter and milk he'd been expecting]." "There's no need for me to complain to the *amghar* [local ruler, in Berber] [i.e. in order to seek retribution]."

[15] Here Khalid uses the term "Berber" to differentiate Muslim from Jew, rather than a religious identification. However, given the fluidity of identities, there are instances in which Jews are also referred to as Berber, by themselves or others, as discussed in Chapter Two.

> What's important is that it's not direct. He can't demand of her, "Why didn't you bring me my part of the butter?" —even if she had deprived him of his part by keeping his share for herself.
>
> As for us [Muslims], it is better to fight with someone or do something to him than—. It's like that—it's fear and patience that help them [Jews] succeed in their life. We [Muslims] are crazy—we always prefer to fight with people [presumably between Muslims], but you fight for just ten minutes or forty-five minutes and you do something you'll regret afterwards. It is better to be cunning, ah, be patient to get your part, and it is God who will pay you, no one else, you know.

In this anecdote, the insult, "What more do you want from God?" once again is oblique and ambiguous. It could be taken as positive—i.e., "what God has give her," yet mean the opposite, "how God has already punished her."[16] The indirectness is also what makes it humorous, for were the Jewish man to say directly what he was thinking (that is, according to Khalid), it would not be funny, but abusive. However, one might still find the Jewish man's response to be abusive, which highlights the sometimes-fine line between humor and abuse (both of which insults can contain). But while Khalid found the Jewish man's response to be funny, the humor was not Khalid's only interest in the story, as evident in the way he analyzed the story for me: while the Jewish man knew he had been cheated, and might even have been justified in directly insulting the woman or demanding his share (though he probably realized it was long gone), he opted instead for an indirect approach, in which he made clear that the woman was not even worth his time. Khalid understood this anecdote as a "lesson" of sorts in how to use wit to avoid conflict and losing face. "Cunning" was a stereotype of Jews that was appreciated by Muslims, yet was also viewed pejoratively to indicate sneakiness or shiftiness. For Khalid, the Jewish character was perhaps a stand-in for ambivalently admired behavior.[17] By using the quoted speech of the "other" (the Jewish man in this case), Khalid could identify with him, as well as distance himself from him.[18]

Finally, just as in Haim's anecdote, in Khalid's there was a disruption to the presumed social hierarchy of Muslim over Jew. In Khalid's anecdote, this was due to the fact of a Jew insulting a Muslim. The social hierarchy was further complicated in that the Jew was male, and the Muslim female, given men were higher in the social hierarchy than women. Also, the woman was likely poorer than the man—he had the capital to buy the cow, and in effect, she was working for him. Yet the woman also outsmarted the man, because, after all, she got the milk and butter and he did not. However, in Khalid's telling, the man had the last word, as it were. This appreciation of wit over outcome is characteristic of Berber folktales, as well as in the poetry duels, as we saw in Chapter Three. Rather than the fighting Khalid bemoans, Berber tales often

[16] It also corresponds to what James Matisoff identifies as an insult masquerading as a question (2000).

[17] Such stereotypes of subordinate groups are typical in folklore, as folklorist Lee Haring writes, "Inequality encourages deviousness and indirection ... folklore enacts them" (Haring 2016:274).

[18] For more on the use of "reported speech" to distance oneself from "inappropriate" (or otherwise) utterances and on double-voice theory, see Hill and Irvine (1992: Introduction) and Hill (1995). 'The pragmatic force of these reports.. .is precisely to convey an attitude held by the reporter, which it is inappropriate to represent directly" (Hill and Irvine 1992:15).

revolve around the contest of wits as opposed to the escalation of wrongs (see, for example, Leguil 2000:19, 258).

In both Haim's and Khalid's anecdotes, it was the "other"—that is, the Muslim for Haim, and the Jew for Khalid—who used wit to avoid direct insult and conflict. Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of dialogism and polyphony help understand how, speaking in one another's voices allow Muslim and Jewish narrators to express multiple and often contradictory meanings simultaneously. This allows for the expression of ambiguity and acknowledgment of unresolved tensions. As political theorist Andrew Robinson describes this dialogism and polyphony,
"Instead of a single objective world, held together by the author's voice, there is a plurality of consciousnesses, each with its own world" (Robinson 2011).

Farmers Versus Traders and Craftsmen

The religious rivalry between Muslims and Jews carried over to banter and insults regarding each religious group's typical type of work. As noted in earlier chapters, Muslims tended to practice farming while Jews were traders and craftsmen. Each party held distain for the other's type of work, at the same time that they were interdependent. The excerpts of two poetry duels that follow play specifically on differences between the typical occupations of Jewish and Muslim men. There were no restrictions against Jews owning land in Morocco, yet even when they did own agricultural fields, it was rare for them to work the land themselves. In fact, they generally considered such agricultural labor beneath them and often had Muslims do it for them.[19] Several jokes and lines remembered from poetry duels play on this difference in the typical work performed by each religious group. For example, a Muslim elder recounted the following lines (likely an excerpt from a poetry duel) sung by a Jew to a Muslim, which give expression to the rivalry around agricultural labor versus trade and craftsmanship:

> Y ou get up very early and work hard the entire day in the fields,
> all for no benefit [i.e. yet you aren't able to earn a living from it];
> Whereas I get up leisurely, have my breakfast, set up my tent [shop] for the rest of the
> day, and have earned my living.

Sung verbal sparring about the value of different types of work was not unique to relationships between Muslims and Jews in Atlas Mountain Berber culture; this theme existed (and continues to exist) in Muslim versus Muslim duels, as in the example cited in Hoffman (2008:127-34), in which each singer justifies his choice—one for working in the city, and one for staying in the village and working the land.

The following poetry duel recounted by a Muslim man (originally from the Anti-Atlas village of Tahala, but living in Casablanca when we met) also makes reference to working the land, as well as an oblique reference to the typical Jewish occupation of blacksmithing—the making as well as repairing and sharpening of tools.

[19] A noted exception to this were the Jews in the village of Ulad Mansur, as noted in Chapter Three (For a discussion of this, see Schroeter, 2011). Ironically, Atlas Jews were assumed to be farmers when sought for emigration by Zionist emissaries (Yehuda Grinker [1973], one of these emissaries, writes of his frustrating search for Jewish farmers in the Atlas); and many were settled in farming communities in Israel.

It was the period of the harvest and a certain Tahala Jewish man went to another village to buy some wheat. When he arrived at the seller's place, he found a Tahala Muslim man there for the same reason. Given that the two of them were poets, the Jew knew the other would not keep quiet. So the Jew went on the attack and sang:

> "One must make sure that one's own plow is working [sharpened] if
> one wants the goods,
> And not serve oneself from what others have reaped."

The Muslim did not respond, and so he lost [for the time being].
However, a few days later back in Tahala, the Muslim poet passed through the *mellah* [Jewish neighborhood] on his way to a blacksmith. It was raining and he saw the Jewish poet up on his roof fixing leaks. Taking advantage of the latter's somewhat vulnerable position he sang:

> "May God put a curse on all that you have brought to the world, you
> Satan.
> And may He curse all the Jews as well. Amen."

The Muslim continued walking past the house and the Jew followed him above, moving along the edge of the roof. When they both reached the far corner, the Jew came back with his response:

> "We have no need to work the land nor use water for irrigation,
> "God has granted us sustenance and long life [i.e. without
> having to work the land]."

In this duel we see the disdain with which Jew and Muslim treated the other's work, at the same time acknowledging, if only implicitly, that the types of work were totally interdependent. This particular battle of wits becomes rather harsh, raising the question of when such insults crossed boundaries into the unacceptable. It appears to have been "safe" for Jews to engage in such open insult, however, because it was expressed publicly in the formalized form of a sung duel.

In both of the preceding examples, we again have Muslim narrators speaking through a Jewish voice (in the first), and both Muslim and Jewish voices (in the second). Also, in each example, the Jew has the last word, and is presumably admired by the Muslim narrator, as well as by the chain of narrators that had transmitted these excerpts over the past half-century. In this section, we saw rivalries not based on religious differences between Jew and Muslim, but rather on their separate but interdependent economic spheres. In the following section we will look at another way in which insults are possibly related to occupation in the next section.

DAILY ENCOUNTERS: AFFECTIONATE (OR NOT) SUBVERSIONS

The interview excerpts discussed in this section show more explicit examples of the ambivalent attitudes between Jews and Muslims. The storytellers pair expressions of admiration and/or affection with those of disdain or distancing, suggesting a "can't live with them/can't live without them" attitude towards their interdependent relationships. I suggest that contributing to each group's nostalgia for the other as expressed in their reminiscences is that this relationship between them was unique; neither Atlas Jews nor Muslims have replicated such intergroup relationships since the Jews' massive departure from the Atlas Mountains. The contradictory pairings also reflect the ongoing interplay between the sometimes simultaneous needs for differentiation and affiliation, a theme running throughout this dissertation. Just as a Muslim and a Jew hailing from the same small village of the Tifnout region recounted the excerpts in the previous section, so a Muslim man and Jewish women hailing from the same small village, Izeggwaren, of the Taliouine region recount the excerpts in this section.[20]

Minters and Bastards

Da Boualem[21] was a Muslim Berber in his seventies, from a small village, Izeggwaren, in the Anti-Atlas Mountains. His work often brought him to the town of Taliouine where I met him, the administrative center for the region of the same name, a wide river valley famous for saffron production. Excerpts from his reminiscences illustrate the ambivalent attitudes and positive/negative pairings mentioned earlier:

> I adore *Iskakken* [Berber, lit., minters fig., Jews] because they are reasonable, trustworthy. They pay you [i.e. in business associations], they even loan you money if you need. They are good, life with them is good, those *aoulad l'hram* [Arabic, fig., bastards; lit. children of the forbidden/sinful].

First an explanation of the term *Iskakken* is needed. It is an ambiguous term, holding varied connotations that are worthwhile to explore because they provide us with clues regarding issues of stereotypes and complex forms of social hierarchies between Muslims and Jews. Da Boualem uses the term *Iskakken* for "Jews," rather than the actual Berber word for Jews, *Udayn.* The use of *Iskakken* for Jews is particularly present among Tashelhit-speaking Muslims of the Anti-Atlas Mountain regions. The Berber word *Askak* (masc., sing) is laden with possible interpretations. *Askak* in origin is a trade/artisan word and literally means "one who mints coins," a historical occupation of Moroccan Jews.[22] By extension, it also came to mean "one who works with metals," such as silversmiths, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, welders, and jewelers, in particular, all

[20] According to the French Captain Bontoux's report in 1951, their village had 55 Jews out of a total population of 174.

[21] I use *Da* before his first name in keeping with the local custom, particularly of the Taliouine region (I did not hear this used in my other main region of fieldwork, Tifnout), of using *Da* as a term of respect (in the Tashelhit dialect) for elderly men by and for both Jews and Muslims. It does not have the same connotation of social superiority as the Arabic *Sidi* discussed later in this chapter. (*Da* is distinct from *Dadda,* which is used to address an older male family member),

[22] This was true particularly in Siljimassa as early as the eighth century (Jacques-Meunie 1982:225-226).

professions dominated by Jews in the Atlas Mountains.[23] While Jewish artisans dominated many of the crafts, several scholars point to the aversion to metal-working by Muslims as a primary reason for Jews' dominance in metalwork, and by extension, the low regard held in general by rural Moroccans for those doing such work whether Muslim or Jew. Two possible reasons for the negative Muslim views of metalwork are 1) that transforming metal into something that might be sold for more than the intrinsic value of the metal's weight was considered usury, which is forbidden in Islam; and 2) that transforming metals by fire, the "infernal element" had negative connotations for Morocco's rural Muslim population (Jacques-Meunie, 1982:391-92).[24] This explanation would support a negative valence to the term, *askak,* but metalwork was not the only trade rural Moroccans disdained,[25] nor were Jews necessarily disparaged for practicing it. For example, photographer Angela Fisher observed that historically throughout the Atlas Mountains, "most Berbers have always regarded working with metals as an inferior occupation, and they therefore welcomed the Jewish smiths into their villages" (Fisher 1984:231). And, interestingly, when the Jews emigrated, Muslims in many villages took on the trade, often having learned it from Jews and even at times assuming control of their workshops when they left.

In my fieldwork I heard varied reactions to the use of *Askak* for Jew. My thirty-year-old Muslim research assistant in Taliouine insisted that it was a neutral term identifying a group by occupation rather than religion. Some of the Jews I asked were familiar with it, but none took it to have a negative connotation. Yet, tellingly, Jews themselves did not seem to use the term for metalworker to mean "Jew." An example is the following excerpt from my conversation with two Jewish sisters, Tamou, 74, and Solaika, 86, natives of the same village (Izeggwaren) as Da Boualem who were living in Tiberias, Israel, when I spoke with them in the older sister's apartment. The sisters spoke Moroccan Arabic to each other, but proudly asserted that they had not forgotten any Berber. We spoke mostly Hebrew together; my translation follows:

SARAH: I heard in Morocco that sometimes they [Muslim Berbers] would call Jews *Isqaq*?
TAMOU: *Askak*, *Askak* [correcting my pronunciation].[26] It means *Uday* [Berber, Jewish male] in Tashelhit.[27]
BOTH: *Isakken* is plural, *Udayn* [Berber, Jews, masc. pl]. *Taskakt* [Tashelhit] means *Tudayt* [Berber], a woman. A man is *Askak.*
SARAH: So that's in Tashelhit. And *Uday?*
TAMOU and SOLAIKA: Also in Tashelhit.
SARAH: Is there a difference?
TAMOU: No, no, no.
SOLAIKA: They're the same.

[23] For historical citations of this, see Gatell (1871:100) and Jacques-Meunie (1982:390-392).

[24] For more on Muslim disregard for metalwork, see Hunwick (1985:163).

[25] Fisher also writes of this disdain for metal smiths historically and in folklore: "The Tuareg simply treat them as a race apart, but the Moors class them as 'the despised', together with fisherman and hunters. In old Moorish tales they are always described as scoundrels and crafty liars" (Fisher 1984:231). It is worth noting that Jews were not hunters because game meat is not kosher.

[26] I had made the mistake of using guttural "q" instead of "k," as well as conflating the plural and singular forms.

[27] I use "Tashelhit" here (the dialect spoken by my interlocutors and all Berbers of the southwestern High Atlas and Anti-Atlas Mountains), rather than the more general "Berber," as elsewhere, because the term *Askak* as used for "Jew" is specific to that dialect.

SARAH: Does *Askak* have a negative connotation?
BOTH: No, no, no, no.
SOLAIKA: No. Some people say "*Uday*" some say "*Askak*." That's all.
SARAH: But what would you say when you were speaking in Tashelhit? Would you say *Askak* or *Uday*?
TAMOU: No, Muslims use *Askak*.
SOLAIKA: We, Jews, *Uday*.
SARAH: But for example if you're speaking with Muslims, might you say, "the Jews go..."?
SOLAIKA: *Udayn*.
TAMOU: No, we don't have any such thing that we say. I don't speak of "my Jews."
SOLAIKA: We just say, *"We* go!" *[laughing]*
BOTH *[laughing]: Ddan Iskakken. Ddan Udayn I'Falestine* [Jews go. Jews go to Palestine (Tashelhit)].

Later in our conversation Solaika remembered a Muslim woman who used *Askak* in an expression in Berber I didn't recognize, which Tamou translated as, "Burn the Jews." She went on to describe this woman, "Not only that, when she walked by the *mellah*, she would pinch her nose and say it was so that she wouldn't smell the smell of Jews. Yes! Such hatred. She hated Jews." I asked if there were others like that, to which she responded, "No, no, no. She was an exception. What hatred. Like Hamas. She was like Hamas, Hezbollah." The expression "Burn the Jews" would have been just as abhorrent if the actual term for Jews were used, so it is not the use of *Iskakken* that makes it so. We will see this mapping over of present-day politics later in this chapter.

Nor did the pervasive use of *Askak* among my Muslim narrators of the Taliouine region of the Anti-Atlas Mountains seem necessarily to carry a pejorative meaning. They either used it consistently or, more rarely, *Uday*, but generally did not interchange the terms. Yet there were several indications that its use was not always neutral. Because I heard it so often in Taliouine, yet had not heard it during my prior fieldwork in the Tifnout River valley of the southern High Atlas Mountains (whose inhabitants speak the same Berber dialect—Tashelhit—as in Taliouine), I asked my Tifnouti research assistant about it. She told me, "Oh, we use it, too. We just didn't want to use it in front of you."

In fact, several elder Muslims in Taliouine told me that it irritated Jews to be called *Askak*, as in the following anecdote, recounted by a Muslim man regarding Yaqob Peres, the "last Jew" of Taliouine, who lived there until the 1980s[28] (some of this may get lost in translation, but will be discussed below):

[28] Peres remained in Taliouine until the 1980s (the rest of the region's Jewish community had left en masse in the early 1960s).

> A woman comes to Yaqob and asks him, “*Askak*, will you entertain my children?” He’s mad, offended that she called him that; it’s disrespectful.
> One should call him by his first name or last, Peres. So he thinks, “What can I do to get back at her?” So he says to her, “Ok, here’s how to entertain them, keep them out of school tomorrow!”

The narrator and a younger Muslim man sitting with us both laughed heartily, apparently at the idea of the Jewish man, a good friend of the narrator, getting the better of the [Muslim] woman. Peres had worked as a merchant and had all kinds of treats and toys in his shop, which is perhaps why the woman had turned to him to entertain her children (young Muslim men told me how, as kids, they used to steal from him because “he was the only one with all that good stuff”). The humor took some effort to decode, but I eventually understood it to be similar to the ambiguous, nuanced humor of the anecdote in the previous section about the sharing of the cow between the Jewish man and Muslim woman. Here the humor plays on the stereotype that Jews have of Berber Muslims being primitive and uneducated.[29] Muslims were aware of this stereotype, as a Muslim man told me that Jewish men would say the following proverb, as if spoken by a Muslim man: “I prefer digging the dirt with my fingernails than educating my children.” As with the Jewish man and the cow in Khalid’s anecdote earlier, Peres’s indirect insult could be understood as a response to the woman’s slight against him. Further, Peres’s response turns what he (through the narrator) takes as an uneducated way of speaking into a direct reference to education, possibly implying, “Keep them out of school and they’ll be as stupid as you,” or that the children of such a stupid woman are not worth educating. In this anecdote, just as in Khalid’s, a Muslim raconteur made fun of a Muslim woman by means of the words of a Jewish man—that is, disrespecting her, the gendered “other,” but through the voice of a Jewish man. And, in each case, in the context of the telling, the narrators seem to imply that the Muslim woman had “asked for it.” Thus, just as for Khalid, Da Boualem could both identify with, as well as distance himself from the words of the Jewish man, and from responsibility for what was said,[30] and once again we see the contradictory pairing of admiration and distancing.

Returning to the excerpt of Da Boualem’s narrative above, I propose considering his use of *Iskakken* and *aoulad i’hram* (bastards) as another example of these contradictory pairings:

[29] It is not clear how much reality plays into such stereotyping by Jews. As we saw in the Chapter Two regarding education in the Atlas, Jewish boys generally studied in the religious schools several years longer than their Muslim counterparts. Also, through the Alliance Israelite Universelle Jews had access to French education before most Muslim Berbers; the Alliance school in this region (Ighil n’Ogho) functioned from 1955-1963. However, it is also common in Jewish folklore in general to treat non-Jews stereotypically as stupid and ignorant. But it is interesting here how it is expressed through the Muslim narrator. Ironically, these are the same stereotypes that Jews from Morocco’s Atlas Mountains have been stigmatized with in Israel by the dominant Ashkenazi hegemony.

[30] This follows a Bakhtinian sense of narration, where the narrator does not employ his own voice, but rather allows his characters to shock or subvert ([1929] 1984a).

> I **adore *Iskakken*** [Berber, lit., minters fig., Jews] because they are **reasonable, trustworthy**. They pay you [i.e. in business associations], they even loan you money if you need. **They are good**, life with them is **good**, those ***aoulad I'hram*** [Arabic, fig., bastards; lit. children of the forbidden/sinful, my emphasis].[31]

In each line, Da Boualem combined an admiring expression with a derogatory one—if indeed *Iskakken* had negative connotations. One interpretation might be that Da Boualem's use of *Iskakken* and *aoulad I'hram* functioned to distance himself from his own expressions of affection or admiration for the trustworthiness and basic goodness of Jews. That is, while his affection was sincere, he might also have felt ambivalent about it, or felt the need to establish social distance and temper his positive expressions to conform to Muslim societal norms. That said, I do not believe his calling Jews "bastards" (and "Iskakken," if pejoratively meant) was a matter of the imposition of present-day conflicts on his reminiscences (or not only that), but rather of the ongoing religious rivalry, whereby both Jewish and Muslim considered themselves to be practicing the true religion, and that the other was impure. By extension of their perceived impurity, Jews were considered unclean by Muslims, and therefore, pairing their mention with a negative term was a way of excusing the speaker for admiring someone viewed as impure. Of course, "bastard" can also be used with affection, especially between good friends, as in English one might say, "We love you, you bastards!" In this sense it is actually an expression of endearment, and therefore "bastard" can have both a positive and negative valence.

In another example, Da Boualem himself described insulting a Jewish friend to his face: "I love Jewish sayings and their jokes. One time I said to Peres [who we met above] — he was a very good friend— 'you're going to hell.' He answered me, 'How do you know? One doesn't know who's going to paradise and who's going to hell. We bury them and you bury them, but after that, it's still not clear!'"[32]

Past and Present: Mountains and Stairs

Returning to Israel, and to Tamou and Solaika, the two sisters in Tiberias, let us look at more contradictory pairings. Tamou and her older sister, Solaika, both lived in the public housing projects, described in slang as *blokim* (as mentioned in Chapters Two and Three, this was typical for many of my interlocutors in Israel), situated far up the hill, away from the

[31] It is common to use Arabic words mixed in with Berber. Later we will see the use of a Berber word for bastard.

[32] This appears to be another topos with a wide geographic range. A young Muslim man told me of hearing this from his elders in the High Atlas town of Kelaat Mgouna (far to the east of my fieldwork sites, where a different dialect, Tamazight, of Berber is spoken): "The Jews were praying in their synagogue and the Muslims in their mosque. As they were each coming out from their prayers, they met outside and were talking. A Muslim asked a Jew, 'Well, so who is going to paradise, you the Jews, or we the Muslims?' And the Jew replied, 'Neither you the Muslims, nor we the Jews have yet had anyone who has died and come back to tell us, so let's both keep praying.' What he meant was, 'only God knows, so we better all keep praying in the meantime, you in your mosques, and we in our synagogues.'" (Levin 2007:188).

touristic center of Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee. The projects, as the name implies, constituted the poorest section of the city, and is where most of the Moroccans in Tiberias lived.[33]

Tamou lived on the fourth floor. The day I visited her, someone was cleaning the stairs above me, the soapy water splashing down, as I went up the stairwell to her apartment. I walked upstream, in sandals, trying to avoid getting my feet wet or slipping. The stairs were made of concrete covered with a slick surface. There were no elevators, and many aging people, like Tamou's husband, and Solaika, who lived several flights up, were no longer able to walk up and down the stairs due to bad knees (or other age-related impairments), imprisoned as it were in their own apartments.

As mentioned earlier, the sisters happen to be natives of Izeggwaren, the same village as Da Boualem, still today a tiny village in the Taliouine region of Morocco. Tamou had married into the larger village of Ighil n'Ogho. Early in our conversation, I showed Tamou photos of Jews from Ighil n'Ogho.[34] Regarding a photo of three merchants traveling on donkeys, she responded excitedly:

TAMOU: That's Messaud Bohbot, and that's Shimon—Shimon—Shimon Drei [Jewish men]. And that's a Muslim of ours [third man in photo] who accompanies us, you see, because they [Muslims] love us [Jews].

SARAH: Why? Do you know why they love you?

TAMOU: Why? Because they live with us. They're poor, really poor. They don't have anything to wear, they don't have anything to eat, nothing, nothing. The government—I don't know if anything has changed now—but the government then was terrible, poor things. So they lived with us; they seek us out; they bring us places—because there wasn't gas. There wasn't—everything there was natural, just like in the desert [laughs]. No gas, no oven, nothing. It was hard. Hard.
That's it, yes.

SARAH: And they miss you a lot now.

TAMOU: Of course. They said, "Come back, come back; don't stay [away]," but we couldn't.

SARAH: Did they [Jews] also love Muslims?

TAMOU: "Look, they helped us a lot. And they didn't get much pay for that. A little something to eat. Sugar for tea. All sorts of things There, there wasn't money, no. We'd give them just what they'd worked for.
There wasn't money...

SARAH: Were they [Muslims] sad when you [Jews] left for Israel?

TAMOU: Sad, yes, but [drawing out the words] don't believe that they're sad. Arabs are Arabs.[35] Y ou can't trust a goy even forty years in the

[33] This applies to those Moroccans who were part of the immigration waves of the 1950s and 1960s. Moroccan Jews had actually been living in Tiberias for several centuries. See, for example, Geva-Kleinberger 2009.
[34] These were photographs taken by Elias Harrus, mentioned in Chapters One and Three.
[35] Bilu and Levy noted a similar sentiment reflecting the mapping of Israeli nationalist discourse onto collective memory from their Jewish interlocutors (from another region of the Atlas Mountains) who were living in Israel at the time they interviewed them:

> grave. Isn't that true that it's written in the Torah? Even after forty[36] years.

This narrative winds between positive and negative impressions of Tamou's former nonJewish neighbors in Morocco. However, here it is a different kind of "pairing" than that in Da Boualem's narrative. Da Boualem's pairing likely reflects the general Jewish-Muslim rivalry in the Atlas that predated the current nationalist bifurcation that opposes Jews to Arabs/Muslims. In Tamou's speech (and later in her sister's), by contrast, a nostalgic view of the past becomes imbricated with present-day rhetoric and discourse (and note her use of present tense). Notably, Tamou had used the term "Muslim" while speaking Hebrew instead of the term "Arab" that most of my informants use when speaking Hebrew (whereas, when speaking in Arabic, they are more likely to use "Muslims"), until the end of the passage, when she switched to "Arab," her sentiments becoming more negative and reflecting the imposition of contemporary conflicts and nationalistic discourse.

Together we went to visit Solaika, who lived a few streets away (also up several flights of stairs), where I showed them photos of their natal Moroccan village on my computer. Solaika clapped when she heard that I went all the way there.[36] [37] Tamou exclaimed excitedly, "Here are our mountains! Here is our mosque!"

From the conversation, it is clear that it was not only the "poor" Muslims who loved them, as Tamou had claimed earlier, but also some of the wealthy and prominent families in their village as well as in those nearby. The sisters spoke fondly of several Muslim family friends, and of a Muslim man who would watch over them when their father was away (as a traveling merchant, like so many Jewish men of the region). As it happened, one of the recordings of Da Boualem's stories that I played for them turned out to mention their father, prompting reminiscences of his with the *Hajj* (the honorific title for a man who has completed the pilgrimage to Mecca):[38]

> SOLAIKA: My father was his *very* good friend.
>
> TAMOU: He loved my father and my father loved him. He would come to us and we'd make *tanurt* [a special type of bread] for him, that is, bread, and honey we'd give them, and butter, and olive oil, because we ground it; we had olive trees.... He'd buy *all* our wares, all our almonds, everything that we had, all our delicacies.

> As in other aspects of their former lives, the informants' discourse on their last days in Oulad Mansour appears to involve retrospective evaluations of the past informed by images of the Arabs which have been crystallized in Israel. One blatant example is the claim that 'some Arabs were crying not because they felt sorry that the Jews were leaving, but because they realized they lost the opportunity to slaughter us all.' (1996:308)

[36] This proverb is not actually in the Torah, but its usage extends as far back as late antiquity. There is much that could be said about it and its usage, but that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, it is worth noting, with Galit Hasan-Rokem (1998:111) that "as a genre, proverbs often, though not always, reflect conservative ideas. Thus, it is not surprising to find in them prejudice against the stranger.. Due to their concise form and often explicitly oppositional structure, proverbs may convey intergroup relations in an almost naively brisk form."

[37] "Well done! " they both exclaim. Moroccan Jews in Israel are typically impressed and emotionally moved when hearing that I have visited their villages, which are often quite far from main roads and difficult to get to, still today.

[38] We will meet this *Hajj* again in Chapter Five.

Their faces lit up with these reminiscences, and the description of the devotion of their Muslim friends gave the impression that the sisters felt treated like royalty during their youth in the Atlas Mountains, certainly in comparison with their lives in the housing projects in Israel. Showing Tamou and her sister photos and playing recordings of Muslims from their village led them into wistful remembrances of the past, and to Tamou shifting from the term "Arab" to "Muslim." Of course, it's not always possible to sort out the interplay between past and present in my interlocutor's reminiscences. Past and present are in dialogic tension, in Bakhtin's sense, without a felt need to reconcile them. Contemporary political conflicts and its discourse at times became mapped onto the views of the past, resulting in a doubled perspective**.**

Affectionate Subversions

As mentioned in Chapter One, prior to Morocco's independence from France, the Atlas Mountains operated under a system of tribal patronage. Jews did not form tribes of their own, but came under the protection of Berber Muslim tribes (weaker Muslim tribes also did). Certain privileges came with this protection, including the neutrality that allowed Jewish peddlers to travel safely across tribal boundaries throughout southwestern Morocco (Schroeter 1989). As "clients" under Muslim "patronage," Jews were supposed to address Muslim men with the honorific *"Sidi"* (Arabic, my lord *[sayyid])* preceding their first name.[39] Despite changes to this system under French colonial rule, certain elements of the hierarchy remained, in language, for example. European travelers to these regions who observed this commented on the obsequiousness of Jews towards Muslims. However, some accounts tell a different story. According to these, Jews often undermined this obligatory term of respect towards Muslims with insults, particularly in the memories of Muslim interlocutors. For example, Muslims in Taliouine told me that Jewish men would say *"azdi"* instead of *"sidi."* When addressing someone, it is common to say "a" as an avocative preceding a first name or the honorific "sidi," so *"a-sidi"* could easily elide into *"azdi,"* a nonsense syllable in Berber.[40] Another researcher reported that he heard, also from Muslim interlocutors, that Jews would say "*aydi*" instead of "*sidi*," which means "dog" in Berber.[41] Richard Bauman describes the possible force of such speech acts: "The transformation of the source utterance in such a way that it continues to display its derivation but is rendered ridiculous becomes a powerful means of enacting a challenge to the authoritative word" (Bauman 2004:158). As noted earlier in this chapter, "dog" is one of the worst insults one

[39] *Sidi* is Arabic and is also used in the cities between Muslims by servants to masters, and lower class to upper class, often by the shortened *Si.*

[40] Some Berber speakers have suggested it could be *a-zdi,* whereby the *zdi* means "stuck," as in "O, you who are stuck."

[41] Muslim accusations of subversion by Jews of their texts go back to early Islamic writings, starting with the Qur'an. Most of these accounts are actually based on those made by Jewish self-criticism in the Hebrew bible or Jewish oral traditions. One of the major Islamic theological complaints against Jews, particularly in early Islamic writings, is *tahrif,* the allegedly willful corruption and falsification by Jews (and Christians) of their own scriptures (as noted in Qur'an 2:75, 4:46, 5:13, 5:41). See Wasserstrom (1995:174), and Lazarus-Yafeh who refers to "the most basic Muslim argument against both Old and New Testaments" (Lazarus-Yafeh 1992:17). Gordon Newby (Professor of Islamic, Jewish and Comparative Studies) believes that such Qur'anic lines are actually based on Jewish texts and practices (citing to later rabbinic commentaries and exegeses on the Torah), and thereby surmises that Muslims—like my interlocutors—referred to what Jews themselves had written.

can use in Morocco. Anthropologists Y oram Bilu and André Levy write of another example recounted to them by Moroccan Jews in Israel from the High Atlas Mountain village of Ulad Mansur of subverting the obligation to address Muslim men by "sidi": "the fact that they took the trouble to covertly subvert this social duty by ridiculing the **unsuspecting** object of respect (e.g., by mumbling *gidi*[42] [goat] instead of *sidi)* only bears testimony to their hard feelings" (Bilu and Levy 1996:301, my emphasis). However, it is important to note that Bilu and Levy write on the same page that their Jewish narrators spoke of "the harmonious relations with the Muslims."

In fact, my Muslim interlocutors reported such subversions and the irony and irreverence shown to themselves or other Muslims with humor, admiring Jews' wit and wordplay even as it was used against them. As noted above, this is a characteristic of Berber oral traditions, where the premium is placed on wit, no matter at whose expense. Some cases were even viewed as expressions of affection, as in the account by Fatima (a Muslim woman in village of Ighil n'Ogho) of the way one of her brother's closest Jewish friends would speak to him:

> "Where did he go, *Sidi* Marwan *mazghub*?" And, *"Sidi* Marwan, come here, you *mazghub."* They [Jews] say to the Muslim *"mazghub"* because they used to have fun with *Dada* [Berber, older brother].

Fatima said she did not know the origin or exact meaning of the word *mazghub* but understood it to be an insult. It is also possible she just would not say. It means "bastard." My thirty-year-old male research assistant did not recognize the word, but it is known in other regions by Berber speakers of all ages, and even has an entry in a Judeo-Moroccan-Arabic- Hebrew dictionary (Marcus 2011). As mentioned earlier, the term "bastard" holds contradictory valences, both for Muslims and Jews. The Hebrew term for bastard, *mamzer*, can be used affectionately (in mock accusation) and even admiringly in Jewish discourse. *"Ben l'mamzer"* (seen in this chapter's epigraph) is an Arabization (adding the Arabic "l" for "the") of the Hebrew expression *ben mamzer*, son of a bastard, which is an intensification of the insult bastard. More common in Hebrew is "bastard son of a bastard." *Mazghub* can be used among friends, and also has a similar intensification, *mazghub bin mazghub*, "bastard son of a bastard." So, in Fatima's words quoted above, we see again the pairing of a term of respect with a term of disrespect, *sidi* and *mazghub*, with the use of the latter undermining the former, yet also suggesting affection. Whether Fatima understood the precise lexical meaning or not, it is clear she understood the locutionary force. This is a powerful reminder of why insults are so often misunderstood by outsiders to the local culture. The pragmatics of their use is often more important than their semantics as illustrated by this common example of one's remembering an insult used by the "other" towards one's own group with humor and affection, both in the reminiscence, as well as at the time of its utterance.

In the examples discussed above, insults by Jews could be considered expressions of power by those lower on the social hierarchy than the person they are insulting. For the moment of the insult's utterance they have symbolic power, given their "discursive competences according to genre" (Bauman and Briggs, 1992:161-62). In addition to appreciating the wit and wordplay, Muslims could "safely" laugh because, although there might have been a temporary

[42] Also to note, the pronunciation of goat in Moroccan Arabic is actually *"j'di."* Because Jews often pronounced "s" as "sh," this makes *j'di* a more logical substitution of *shidi* (that *gidi* of *sidi).*

disruption of the social hierarchy, the Jews' insults did not ultimately change the status quo. It is easier to enjoy laughter at one's own expense when one is in the more secure position. That is, these "minor subversions" seem to have been experienced as humorous or having a systempreserving carnivalesque function, in Bakhtinian terms, rather than threatening because they were performed by a minority who was generally without social power.

CONCLUSION

The pairings of negative and positive terms (as well as the use of terms carrying both negative and positive valences) discussed in this chapter reflect the ambivalence in the attitudes of both groups. For example, Bilu and Levy observed of their Jewish Moroccan interlocutors in Israel: "The ambivalent attitude toward Muslims is lucidly manifest in internally contradictory phrases such as '[in Morocco] the Arabs, their names be damned, were good'; or 'the Arabs, may they go to hell, were our defenders.' Even when the 'other' is viewed in a positive light in terms of actions or dispositions, as a social category he is automatically framed negatively." (Bilu and Levy 1996:297). However, their study, and others that highlight this ambivalence, leaves out the elements of humor and of appreciation of wit that seem to have been a large part of the interreligious relationships. Laughter was a means of negotiating sameness, but also eased expression of difference. Nor have other such studies taken into consideration the cultural discourse norms of Berber Muslims and Jews.

An American Apache metaphor of joking, particularly the type that is inclusive of insults, as explained by Keith Basso in his investigation of joking among the Western Apache in *Portraits of the White Men* is perhaps apt for the nature of the insult exchanges between Atlas Mountain Jewish and Muslim friends and neighbors:

> The basic premise is as follows: interpersonal relationships, like untanned hides, are initially 'stiff'... individuals who enjoy 'soft' relationships are those who have known each other for long periods of time, who have established sound bonds of mutual confidence and affection, and who, knowing this, feel free to take certain liberties which, in the context of less mature relationships, would be presumptuous and discourteous .
> Expanding on their analogy, Apaches assert that joking is one means for 'stretching' social relationships, a playful device for testing and affirming solidarity by ostensibly denying it. (Basso 1979:67-68)

As we have seen throughout this chapter, insults have the capacity to contain a simultaneity of seemingly contradictory emotions, and to reflect the flow of lived experience, which itself is always full of contradictions. Various factors played a part in constituting a safe discursive space between Jews and Muslims during the time they lived together and as expressed through their reminiscences. Shared cultural articulations and mutually understood, culturally determined, codes—not to mention culturally-sanctioned forms of humor—were important, as were the acceptance of ambiguity and ambivalence when such codes were not mutually understood. It was an ambivalence in which hostility and affection are not necessarily polarized in this ambivalence, but rather are integrally related. Wordplay, wit, and humor play a key role in

what is remembered and transmitted in the present, just as it served to defuse tensions in the past. Insults and banter between Jews and Muslims in the Atlas Mountains functioned in part in the past—and continue to function in the present-day reminiscences—as strategies for simultaneously asserting difference and affinity.

However, this does not mean that relationships between Muslims and Jews were free of tension, or even conflict. Knowing the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable, permissible and not permissible was crucial, yet determining this boundary was not always easy or clear. In the following chapter we will see one story of what happened when the boundaries were breached.

CHAPTER FIVE

Ambivalent Laughter: Religious Boundaries Breached, Removed, or Circumvented

A Muslim poet sang:

> "We share this gathering with Jews,
> We ask God for forgiveness."

A Jewish poet responded:

> "The *shisheet* is the only difference [between us]. It's easy to
> take it off."

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a glimpse into how Jews lived as the only religious minority among a Muslim majority in a Berber cultural environment. According to both my Jewish and Muslim interlocutors, Jewish villagers were full participants in Berber cultural life, yet at the same time sought to assert their own identity and difference. Life between Jews and Muslims was a continual negotiation of identities out of which came humor, creativity, and community. The examples presented in this chapter reflect a social life "full of ambivalent laughter," to use Bakhtin's famous observation on the carnival. Such laughter is "at once mocking, destructive, and joyfully reasserting," and insists that the one laughing is also being laughed at (Bakhtin [1965] 1984b:241). The examples dance around the edges of "religion," more so than the previous chapter, and play with the idea of what constitutes religious boundaries. I also continue to investigate how boundaries did not always fall neatly or predictably into these religious categories, nor did the complex socio-political stratification fit into a simplified majority- minority binary. Boundaries of all types existed: class, race, social, political (hierarchical), gender, religious. Not all of these were not fixed, but rather in flux and could be crossed or negotiated. Cultural and religious categories bled into each other in inseparable ways. This chapter also explores intertextuality and ambivalence in assertions of commonality and difference, particularly in a close examination of poetry duels between Muslim and Jewish poets.

The anecdotes explored in this chapter were all recounted by Muslim narrators, through whom Jewish points of view were mediated. As seen in the previous chapter, Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of dialogism and polyphony (Bakhtin 1981) help us understand how speaking in one another's voices allows the narrators to hold contradictory glosses and points of view, and different, even contrasting, truths at the same time.

The examples in this chapter are organized into three sections. The example and discussion in the first section is about boundaries breached, literal and figurative. The second section explores the idea of alienable (transferrable or removable) religious identity markers—or performing "as the other" to cross boundaries. The examples in the third section illuminate the negotiation necessary for Jewish minorities to participate socially in—i.e. have access to—public Berber village life and culture, which was also permeated with Islamic traditions, in a way that

preserved and honored their own religious identity and difference. The examples depict circumvention, or perhaps even subversion, of religious boundaries.

THE DOOR STORY: BOUNDARIES BREACHED

Insults and banter between Jews and Muslims in the Atlas were, as we have seen, fairly common, expressing affection as well as hostility, yet even hostility did not generally erupt into conflict. We have also seen in Chapter Three how public poetry duels served to express and somewhat diffuse intercommunal tensions. But what happened when—whether actually or allegedly—insults violated the socially, legally, or religiously accepted boundaries, and tensions did erupt into conflict, even leading to court and jail? The anecdote discussed in this section is about such a case of breached boundaries, literal and/or figurative. On the face of it, this story confirms dominant assumptions about Jewish-Muslim and minority-majority relations that reduce them to Muslim domination over a vulnerable Jewish minority. But when examined more closely in its various contexts (social, political, cultural), a more complex picture emerges, challenging those assumptions.

Da Hamid's Story of the Door

I met Da Hamid, an eighty-plus-year-old Muslim Berber man who recounted the story to me for the first time in February 2012. We met at his home in a small village upriver from the town of Taliouine, the regional administrative center. Spring had arrived early to the Zagmouzen valley: almond trees lined it in white blossoms and fava bean plants rose tall and green in random patches, striking a verdant contrast to the mostly barren Anti-Atlas Mountains rising on either side of the valley. Hidden within these mountains are myriad patches of green, tiny oasis villages, several of which I visited during the course of my fieldwork, and many of them having harbored small Jewish communities until the early 1960s. In differing stages of ruin, Glawa *qasbahs* (adobe fortresses of the dominant Berber tribe who ruled much of southern Morocco by proxy under the French colonial administration, 1912-1956[1]), dot the landscape, either alone on a hilltop or in the midst of a village, towering above the other interconnected mud-brick houses.

Da Hamid had been a poor sharecropper and had also worked closely with Jews in various circumstances. He and his wife were living at one of their married daughters' home. We took advantage of the sun to sit in the interior courtyard, and grandchildren ran freely in and out and sometimes gathered around to listen, a common occurrence during these conversations about the past.

[1] Although the French established their "Protectorate" in Morocco in 1912, they were able to establish control of most regions of the Atlas Mountains only in the 1930s. The French accomplished this largely with the help of the Glawi clan, the powerful Berber warlords who had been in power in the High Atlas Mountains since the 1870s. The Glawa's dominance thus continued and expanded with the support of the French, who pitted Berber tribes against one another, and also used the Glawa to fight Moroccan nationalists up until Moroccan independence in 1956, which also spelled the downfall of the Glawa. For more on this arrangement and the details of Glawi rule, see for example Bidwell 1973; Maxwell 1966; Paul Pascon, *Le Haouz de Marrakech,* 1977. (Note: "Glawi" is the adjective and "Glawa" is the noun.)

According to Da Hamid, only seven Jewish families had lived in his village, while nearby Ighil n'Ogho housed the most substantial Jewish population in the region, around 250 out of a total population of over 600 (Bontoux 1951). There were several other significant Jewish communities in villages throughout the river valley where Jews had been continually present for at least five hundred years (Jacques-Meunie 1982, Chetrit 2010).[2] The last of the region's Jews (other than Y aqob Peres, who remained until the 1980s) had immigrated to Israel by the early 1960s.[3] Early in our conversation, Da Hamid reflected, "Where have the years gone? It was during this season that they [Jews] would give out money for the almonds we harvested. They would come to load up their donkeys, they were everywhere."

Da Hamid was a lively storyteller. He recounted what I call the door story, unprompted, during two separate conversations (the first in February 2012 and the second the following June). As is common in such recollections (and characteristic of folklore itself), there are variations between the two accounts, which I will mention later where relevant. His narrations are fragmentary, chronologically disjointed, and repetitive. It is also unclear which of the incidents Da Hamid reported he had actually observed and which he had heard told; try as I might, I was unable to get clarity on this. He was likely a teenager, or even younger, at the time of the events he narrated in this story.[4] His recounting of the door story followed his response to my asking whether Jews had worked for the particular Glawi ruler he had been speaking of, the *Qa'id* Abdellah, remarkable for his exceptional benevolence amongst a string of harsh rulers.[5] Da Hamid answered that Jews had not, and immediately followed with this anecdote:[6]

> We had a fight with them [Jews] here! The Jews of Ayt Yehia [village name] invited us to an *ahwash*[7]; they were having a wedding. Other Jews came from Imi Nougni [a nearby village]; they were drinking and then a fight broke out in the *mellah* [Jewish quarter] between Jews and Muslims. The next day, Utinfat [a Jewish man]—they [Muslim men] had broken his

[2] In his 1951 report, the French captain Bontoux wrote that there were 1,336 Jews out of 64,000 inhabitants in the Taliouine precinct (1815 square miles), or 2.1 percent of the total. However, in the smaller tribal area of the Zagmouzen (which included Ighil n'Ogho and Da Hamid's village) he wrote that there were 354 Jews out of a total of 1, 517, or over 20 percent of the total population (Bontoux 1951). For more on population numbers of this region and difficulties determining exact numbers, see Schroeter (2011b).

[3] For details on recruitment by Zionist emissaries in Taliouine, see Schroeter (2011b: 187).

[4] Typical of this generation, there are no records of his birth, and he was unsure of his exact age, which he said was "over seventy or eighty." His national identity card stated his birth year as 1951, the date of the opening of Morocco's national registry office. According to another local elder, Qa'id Abdellah ruled from 1940-1945, thus placing the story in those years.

[5] The Berber *qa'ids* were regional rulers *(qa'id* is Arabic for leader or commander; not to be confused with *qadi,* "judge," although the *qa'ids* also served as judges). Morocco's central government, the *Makhzan,* had relied on the Berber *qa'ids* to control southern Morocco, and the French continued this system. The *qa'ids* in the Taliouine region were all appointed by the ruling Glawi clan, and were usually members of that clan.

According to Da Hamid, Abdellah was killed because of this benevolence. The *khalifa* (who served as deputy or "mayor" under the *qa'id)* in Ighil n'Ogho denounced him for squandering al-Glawi's riches on the people to Abdellah's father, Thami al-Glawi, who subsequently had him removed and killed.

[6] This is the second telling, which has more details than the first, perhaps in part due to the fact that it was my second visit with him, creating a deeper level of comfort.

[7] As described in the previous chapter, the *ahwash* accompanies all Berber weddings, whether Jewish or Muslim, as well as many other occasions.

door during the fight—he carried the door to Taliouine [the regional center, about seven miles from his village], to the *Qa'id* Abdellah [in order to lodge a complaint against the Muslims]. When they [Jewish and Muslim men] arrived before the *Qa'id* to be judged by him, the Muslims told the *Qa'id* that the Jews had insulted the religion of Islam. So the *Qa'id* sentenced them [the Jews] to prison until they paid money; then they were released.

When you have a wedding, Jews invite Muslims because they have the drums.[8] They danced the *ahwash*, a row of Jewish women and a row of Muslim women.[9] The Jews had drunk *mahya* [brandy],[10] and they didn't know anymore what they were doing. They were fighting. The Muslims from here were fighting the Jews of Ayt Yehia and the Jews from here [Da Hamid's village]. They went to the *Qa'id* and the Muslims told him that the Jewish men had insulted the Muslim religion. The *Qa'id* sent them [the Jewish men] to prison. All the Jewish women came running out of the *mellah.* They had expected that the *Qa'id* would put the Muslim men in prison, but here they [the Muslims] were coming up from the river singing.
They had calmed down.

There were Ilyahu, Si Elbaz, Moushi U-Ishaq, Bougha, Utinfat [names of the Jewish men]. In spite of that, all was well, my child, all was well [between Jews and Muslims]. They [these Jewish men] had walked in front of Utinfat, who carried the door all the way to Taliouine. They [the Muslim men] had broken his door. *[Da Hamid chuckles]*.

[7 *interjected to ask how long were they in prison and how much they had to pay.]*

Twenty-four hours.[11] A little bit of money, a cone of sugar;[12] if you gave them that, it was good enough. But today you need one or two million, three million.[13] During the time of the Glawi rule, a cone of sugar was sufficient. In the end they were pardoned. The Jews also sang a *tazart* [Berber, sung poem].

Readings and Counter-Readings: Contextualizing the Story

On the face of it, this story would appear to confirm commonly held assumptions, particularly by non-specialists, of Jewish-Muslim and minority-majority relations that reduce

[8] The *tallunt,* or round frame drum (pl.: *tilluna*; cf. the Arabic *bendir),* is typically the only instrument used for the ahwash. Jewish men and women also played it, so Da Hamid's account does not reflect the norm. Perhaps there was a particularly gifted drummer called upon for weddings, just as Hanna and her bread were called upon for weddings in the Tifnute river valley, as we saw in Chapter Three.

[9] Here he retells the events, adding details.

[10] Judeo-Moroccan Arabic, literally *eau de vie.* It is the brandy made by Jews from dates or figs and flavored with anise.

[11] Actually, Da Hamid was inconsistent about how long; the first time he had recounted the story a few months earlier, he said it was "not even an hour."

[12] In Morocco sugar is still sold in large conical shapes; these are used as gifts, particularly for life-cycle occasions such as weddings or births.

[13] This was the amount in rials. (Today 200 rials roughly equal one U.S. dollar.)

them to that of Muslim domination over an oppressed and/or vulnerable Jewish minority. In such a reading, Jews would be viewed as victims of both the Muslims' attack and a biased court. While I will present other possible interpretations, let me first note that there are certainly sociohistorical contexts to provide support for such a reading. As discussed previously, Jews were the only *dhimmis* (protected non-Muslim religious minority) in Morocco under the rule of a Muslim majority that continued to govern under the French colonial administration (1912-1956). However, when examined more closely in its various contexts (social, political, cultural), a more complex picture emerges, challenging those assumptions. For instance, in the past, the assumption of the victimization of Moroccan Jews was generated by the political and ideological agendas of both French colonialism and Zionist nation-building—the Jews therefore being in need of French colonialists or Zionist intervention as their saviors. Such assumptions and agendas prompt exaggeration and misleading generalizations. The image of victimization remains the dominant one that modern-day discourse "backshadows," to use M.A. Bernstein's term (1994), that is, projects back "the past that has intervened since the time of the narrative" (Bernstein 1994:36). The idea of Jew as humiliated victim was, of course, not invented by Zionism or French colonialism but has a long history in European Christendom, both as image and reality. Yet, both enterprises (Zionism and French colonialism) projected European antiSemitism (including that of the colonialists' themselves) onto Morocco, and Zionist ideologies continue to depend on the image of the mistreatment of Jews, particularly by Muslims and Arabs. Furthermore, this plays into contemporary assumptions of the intolerance of Islam towards other religions, which have a particular history in ongoing Muslim-Christian conflict (playing out today in Europe), and the Israeli/Zionist tendency to read Islamic discourse as antiSemitic.

I would argue that projecting such assumptions onto the door story leads to misinterpretations and missed nuances. As with other examples discussed in this dissertation, the value of the story is not in the factuality of the narrated event (which we cannot know), but rather in the richness of perspectives revealed in the analysis. Situating the narrative in various contexts—the socio-historical, the narrator's personal, Berber folklore and humor, and the symbolic (the door as boundary)—draws out attitudes and complexities too often unexplored in other sources, thus challenging reductionist assumptions and providing multivalent interpretations. Together, these contexts act as a prism through which to view the story, and from which a more complex picture of social stratification emerges that challenges a simplified mapping of majority/minority understandings onto Muslim-Jewish relationships. As Clifford Geertz observes about Moroccan Muslim-Jewish relationships in general:

> The point is neither to idealize the symbiotic relationship nor to deny oppression, but to try to see the forms that they took and the kind of society in which they existed. And I would be more radical in this position and say that I think a majority-minority kind of model for the relationship is wrong... does not fit the Moroccan situation, one which is highly individualistic. (Geertz 1975:32)

While these contexts overlap, I will address them below somewhat independently, for the sake of clarity.

Socio-Historical Context: The Arbitrariness of Arbitration

Da Hamid places the door story at the time of rule of the *Qa'id* Abdellah, which was in effect sometime between 1940-1945, according to another local elder. As was often the case in my interlocutors' reminiscences, neither reference to World War II nor French colonialism entered Da Hamid's account.[14] The *Qa'id* Abdellah was a son of Thami al-Glawi, the single most powerful leader of the central High Atlas and the northern Anti-Atlas, which included the region of Taliouine, where the door story took place. Da Hamid described status of Jews under the *Qa'id* Abdellah: "They [Jews] were free and independent, each one with his work; there were saddle-makers, tailors, shoemakers."

As noted above, Da Hamid's account is disjointed and fragmented, as is characteristic of such reminiscences. However, certain omissions in his narrative may be more meaningful than others. The absence of the actual verbal insult by Jews of Islam is conspicuous against the materiality of the door. Da Hamid either does not know or does not remember the words that were spoken; the breaking of the door is the "insult" that resounds in his memory.[15] This conspicuous narrative gap creates ambiguity about what might have been said, and opens the possibility that the insult against Islam was fabricated.[16] The symbolic weight of the breached door is concretized by the image of the aggrieved Jewish party carrying the heavy broken object for seven miles, only to be defeated in court. Not only did Utinfat receive no compensation for the door, but he also received a jail sentence, together with the Jewish men who had accompanied him. Yet, the vivid image in Da Hamid's narrative of the Jewish man marching with the massive door in the hope of prevailing in court belies the stereotype of a weak and frightened Jewish minority with no confidence of receiving a fair hearing.

This story of a Jewish man ending up in jail after being the one to lodge a complaint calls to mind Clifford Geertz's description of a conflict between Berber tribes (in the Middle Atlas Mountains) in which misinformed and unjust intervention by the French colonial authorities caused further pain to the injured party—a Jewish Moroccan man, Cohen—and resulted in a prison sentence. Geertz does not say how long a sentence, but long enough for his family to think him dead. (1973:7-10). Yet, Geertz's interpretation itself also falls into the trap of categorical assumptions, and misses the nuances of local contexts.[17] Geertz defines the conflict as between "three unlike frames of interpretation," Jewish, Berber, and French, and, in so doing, reinforces the division between Jews and Muslims promoted by the French. However, Geertz's anecdote—contrary to his own interpretation of it—actually reveals just how much Jews were part and parcel of Berber culture, both subject to, and protected by, the tribal system of justice. Geertz

[14] While in large part this particular region was unaffected by World War II, some of the effects of French Vichy rule in Morocco (late 1940-1942) reached even some "remote" mountain villages. I did hear accounts from some Jews native to Anti-Atlas Mountain villages of registration of Jewish names and possessions. Fortunately, the Americans' successful North African invasion in the fall of 1942 ended Vichy rule in Morocco. (For the effects of Vichy rule in the Atlas Mountains, see Schroeter 2011:150-151, 2017, and Bilu and Levy 1996)

[15] In his first telling of the story, the particulars of the spoken insult are also glossed over: "Someone said something, I don't know what."

[16] My thirty-something Muslim research assistant was convinced the Jew's insulting Islam was a false allegation, even though, Da Hamid did not explicit stated that it was.

[17] Of course, Geertz himself admits that however long he meditated on it, he knew he "would not get anywhere near to the bottom of it [the story of Cohen and the sheep]" because "Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete" (Geertz 1973:29).

writes that the Jew "speaks fluent Berber," as if it is the exception, not the norm, for such regions. Although the story of Cohen begins with a conflict between Jews and Berber Muslims of another tribe (not the one providing protection to the Jewish man), it becomes a conflict between Cohen and the French colonial authorities. Cohen had confidence in receiving justice from the tribal system, and indeed did. But this made him suspect to the French, and so they punished him for supposedly aligning with the rebellious tribe. Thus, the Jewish man became a pawn in the fight between rebelling Berber tribes and French colonials.[18]

Contrary to what might be expected, recent scholarship based on in-depth study of legal documents, as well as of oral testimonies of Muslims and Jews, has shown that Jews were not necessarily at a disadvantage in these Muslim-run courts.[19] My Muslim interlocutors added their own opinions that Jews might actually have advantages in the courts. According to one: "That's how it was during the era of [French] occupation; if a Jew lodged a complaint against you, he would win! Because the *makhzan* used the Jews to collect taxes," referring to an advantageous position of Jews vis-à-vis government officials that I will explore later in this chapter. Another Muslim man told me that whichever party paid the least—that is, a bribe dressed up as a fine— might end up in prison. "And so," he added, "in a case between Muslims and Jews, it was often Muslims who went to prison, because they didn't have the money." Like Da Hamid, many Muslims in the region were poor sharecroppers (working for wealthier Muslims or occasionally Jews), or barely eked out a living on their own small plots of land. It is a refrain of elder Muslims throughout the Atlas that Jews, being peddlers and craftsmen, had more ready cash than many Muslims.[20] These two factors—personal connections and bribes—were widely reported to have played a role in the outcome of court cases.[21] Because of such potential disadvantages in court for Muslims, the Muslim men's line of defense—the accusation of the alleged insult against

[18] French colonialists are absent in Da Hamid's door story (although there were authorities stationed in the region, the French ruled these regions largely through proxy of the Glawi tribe, as mentioned in Footnote 5. Schroeter writes on the effect of French occupation on local courts that they "show no difference after the arrival of French authority" based on his study of legal manuscripts from Ighil n'Ogho, 1917-1952 (Schroeter 2011:184). The *qa'ids* had not been known for their leniency or fairness by the local populations, even before serving as proxy for the French.

[19] During this period preceding Moroccan independence from France in 1956, the court system was multi-faceted. When conflicts arose between Jews and Muslims, as in our story, the *makhzan* (Moroccan central government; Arabic, lit., store, warehouse)—i.e. civil-courts—generally handled them. In rural regions, these courts were run by the *qa'ids.* In addition to the *makhzan* courts, there were *shari 'a* courts, whose jurisdiction covered religious litigations among Muslims; customary courts, whose jurisdiction covered tribal areas; and rabbinical courts, which dealt with religious cases involving only Jews. See Boum (2013: Chapter 2) for an examination of the relationship of Jews to the Moroccan court system in the southern region of Morocco 1893-1957, and who writes "Jews were not seen as outsiders to the legal system because they were active members in the social and economic dealings of the community" (Boum 2006:248).

[20] It should be noted that the "ready cash" does not refer to large amounts of money, as most villagers, Jew and Muslim, were living pretty much at subsistence level. It is also important to point out that Muslim Berber views on Jews and money did not incorporate the negative stereotypes sometimes promoted in Christian Europe. For a generalized historical discussion contrasting views in the Islamic world with those in the Christian world, see Mark Cohen (1994: Ch5; 2005:29-30.)
Daniel Schroeter notes that "the other side of this story of Jews getting out of prison or even winning over Muslims because they had money, is that the *Makhzan* extorted money from Jews" (personal communication).

[21] In addition to my oral accounts, Bilu and Levy (1996:305) also report this, as does Boum (2013:41-42) for personal connections. The word "bribe" does not appear anywhere in Boum's discussion of the legal documents, which is not surprising, given that they would not have been recorded or included in written testimonies. But this also suggests the limits of written documents, typically taken to be more "factual" than oral accounts.

Islam (blasphemy towards Islam is a legal category, a capital offense in traditional Islamic law)—might be viewed in Da Hamid's story as a last resort and fabricated charge (given the ambiguity surrounding what was said that incited the breaking of the door) to win their case in the face of the massive material evidence of the broken door.

It is impossible to know how often Muslims might have used the accusation of Jews insulting Islam as a trump card, particularly when seeking an advantage in court, or how successful it would have been. None of the studies of court cases mentioned earlier include any such reference. However, Da Hamid's narrative points to the power of language in this recurring topos of the false accusation of Jews insulting Islam (that is, charges of blasphemy, which increase in periods of tension). In fact, more general theme of false accusations against a Jew by a Muslim is a common one in certain Jewish-told Middle Eastern folktale collections (among others, Jason 1965, Marcus 1978).[22] As for the reverse, Muslims taken to court for verbally insulting Judaism, I did not hear of any such narratives. As we saw in the previous chapter, Muslims calling Jews infidels or telling them they would burn in hell was somewhat commonplace, even among friends. The majority of such incidents recounted as narratives—by both Jewish and Muslim interlocutors—of Muslims disrespecting or desecrating Jewish holy sites led to a supernatural retribution, such as the perpetrator being stricken with sudden blindness or turned into stone. The belief was that such supernatural punishments could be undone (and usually were) by a sincere apology and the sacrifice of an animal by the perpetrator or his or her family.[23]

I wondered if the event of Da Hamid's story was known in the nearby village of Ighil n'Ogho, and also wanted to get a sense of how common or exceptional it was that intercommunal tensions erupted into such fights of words and/or damage of property. I asked an elderly Muslim man in Ighil n'Ogho about it, a man who had been very close to the Jewish community there. He was not familiar with the incident, but commented: "It's normal, because when you drink and the other also drinks—it's the same between Muslims, they drink and end up slinging insults at each other."

Da Hamid's Personal Context

Da Hamid's own interest in the story may in part have been to highlight the arbitrariness on the part of government officials, which affected Jews and Muslims alike (though differently). To judge from conversations that moved seamlessly between past and present, Da Hamid made it clear that he had neither love for the authorities nor expectations of justice from them (and thus his exceptional admiration for Abdellah's benevolence). Da Hamid himself had been imprisoned once for a month, though the time and circumstances are a bit murky. He is not alone in this skepticism towards the courts. The following proverb, related by an elder Muslim man in Taliouine, illustrates villagers' feelings about the courts (even today): "If you want to settle a complaint in a Moroccan court, you need to have the patience of Job, the fortune of Pharaoh, and

[22] As noted in Chapter One, this may be part of the tendency for collections of Jewish folktales of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), by Israeli-based non-MENA authors for the most part, to emphasize the polarization of Jews and Muslims/Arabs, following the nationalist discourse.

[23] Bilu and Levy (1996:299) heard similar narratives, as did Issachar Ben-Ami (1998). In several stories Canadian Moroccan Jewish author André Elbaz's collection of Moroccan Jewish folktales (1981), Muslim desecrators of Jewish saints' tombs repent and become loyal friends of the Jews involved.

the age of Noah, the prophet." When viewed in the context of such a general view of corruption of the courts, Utinfat's confident expectation of justice in carrying the door indeed becomes more humorous and a jab at Utinfat's foolhardiness.

"We had a fight with them [Jews] here!" Da Hamid exclaimed as he began recounting the anecdote. He included himself as belonging to "the Muslims" who participated ("We had a fight") and found humor in his perception of their manipulation of the case in their favor. He was also amused by the irony of the Jews' imprisonment despite the impressive, yet humiliating, physical effort on the part of Utinfat, especially because the punishment was relatively light. Indeed, as mentioned above, the first time Da Hamid told me the story, he said their jail time was "not even an hour," rather than the twenty-four hours of the second telling.[24] The absurdity of the aggrieved Jewish man lugging the heavy door while his companions walked in front of him, rather than helping him adds to the humor: "They [the named Jewish men] had walked in front of Utinfat, who was carrying the door all the way to Taliouine."

However, Da Hamid's introduction of the story with the exclamation, "We had a fight with them [Jews] here!" connotes the sense of an exceptional event in the course of his life with Jews, especially amidst memories full of playful affection and nostalgia towards his former Jewish neighbors. Evident in my conversations with Da Hamid is a combination of admiration, insult, and affection for them. "It's we who lost them," he said at one point in the conversation. The fact that he includes the Jewish men's names but not those of the Muslims indicates a certain familiarity with the Jewish men.

Furthermore, Da Hamid seems to associate Utinfat, the Jewish protagonist of the door story, with humorous anecdotes. Another clue to understanding Da Hamid's chuckles in describing Utinfat carrying the door is in an additional story that he also recounted during both of our conversations:

> There were Ishua, Braha, Massaoud; it was just the rich guys [Jews]. And there was Utinfat. They were going to a wedding [in another village]. One of them said to Utinfat: "Smiha [Utinfat's wife] doesn't give your donkey[25] enough to eat; you're going to fall and the Jewish girls will laugh at you!"

This is the somewhat different version he told the second time:

> Ighil n'Ogho is a little far from us, when there's a marriage, they come from Ighil n'Ogho and from Ayt Y ehia. There was the time that Utinfat said to Smiha [his wife]: "Feed the donkey well, so that he doesn't make me fall in front of the Jewish girls!"

In this anecdote, Da Hamid specifically named Utinfat's wife as well as the Jewish men (who are different from those in the door story), again showing his familiarity with the community of Jews from Utinfat's village. The implication of Utinfat's large size—by the suggestion that the donkey must be well fed in order to be sturdy enough to carry him—reinforced the reference to his strength in carrying his door. Being well fed was associated with

[24] While the twenty-four-hour jail time increases the drama of the story and the Jewish women's disappointment, the "not even an hour" makes it more humorous.
[25] Donkeys were the main mode of transportation for both Jews and Muslims of these regions at this time.

being well off. This, together with Da Hamid's comment that it was "just the rich guys," signals the class difference—and possible tension—between Da Hamid and many of his Jewish acquaintances. For, despite the fact that Jews were the minority among Muslims, there were two sides to the power dynamics of the interreligious and minority-majority relations. Da Hamid had been caught in a further power imbalance, given that he had worked for a Jewish man (Peres) for eight years. Thus, the door story might also have represented for Da Hamid a bit of a comeuppance over the Jews. And, of course, the image of a fat man on a skinny donkey contributed to the humor of the anecdote.

Berber Folklore Context: Ongoing Rivalries between Jews and Muslims

Placing the door story in the context of Berber folktales, and specifically those of ongoing rivalries between Jewish and Muslim men (some reported as factual by both Muslims and Jews), sheds further light on the humor of the story. In fact, tales of friendship, deception, and reconciliation that turn on ruses or pranks between the protagonists—particularly between Jewish and Muslim men—are prevalent throughout the Atlas Mountains. Da Hamid himself had such a relationship with Yaqob Peres (mentioned above), whom Da Hamid had worked for.[26] By many people's accounts, Peres was known for being a trickster and pulling pranks on his friends. Several interlocutors recounted that, in particular, Peres and his best friend, a Muslim man, were constantly having fun at one another's expense, after which whoever of them was the most recent victim would go running through the market screaming, "What he did to me this time! What he did to me!" Da Hamid reported that Peres was always "putting one over on you" (one of which instances led to the two of them facing each other in court, with the judge pronouncing a Solomon-like solution). Yet, Da Hamid followed that particular anecdote with a comment about how generous and helpful Jews were, and the fact that no one since their departure had taken on that role.

Verbally outwitting an opponent has high value in Berber oral traditions, as we have seen. While the verbal accusation of Jews having insulted Islam was not a particularly witty move on the part of the Muslims in Da Hamid's anecdote about the door, it was words—the speech act of an insult—that prevailed over the materiality of the door in this court case. The story thus enacted the relationship between verbal and material power. This was a reversal of the expectations in folklore that verbal power and wit would typically be associated with the weaker party (here the Jewish minority);[27] yet in this story, it was the Jewish man who was characterized by physical strength, and the majority Muslims who won through verbal exploit. This also suggested a reversal of the presumed hierarchy of Muslim over Jew in Da Hamid's view, as suggested above by the class difference (Da Hamid being poorer than several of his Jewish acquaintances). Adding to the complexity of the analysis, it was Muslims who had broken the door, and it was supposedly words uttered by Jews that angered them enough to do so.

[26] On my first visit, Da Hamid introduced me jokingly to his wife as "Peres' daughter," to which his wife responded, "Oh! Your old friends!" As a Jewish researcher, I sometimes felt I represented the absent Jews for my Muslim interlocutors.

[27] This in fact is true of much folklore in general, that is, the weaker party uses words when their own power is limited in other aspects. See, for example, Haring (2016:266).

Symbolic Context: Doors as Boundaries

The door in this story functioned, both symbolically and literally, as a boundary in a social system in which boundaries were more often symbolic than concrete, though no less consequential for their lack of tangibility. The small villages of the Taliouine region did not contain separate walled-in Jewish quarters. Y et nearly everywhere, Jewish homes were grouped together for the convenience of communal practice of holidays, in particular the weekly observance of Shabbat.[28] In the absence of a wall demarcating a Jewish quarter, the door to a Jewish home likely served symbolically and physically in place of the wall as the passage and/or boundary between Jewish and non-Jewish space (that is, the village at large, which was predominantly Muslim).

The violent breaking of the door in Da Hamid's story was also a powerful breach, again both literally and symbolically, of the boundary between private domestic space and public village space, a significant and gendered boundary for both Jewish and Muslim villagers: the domestic space was generally the domain of the females and the public that of the males. Additionally, the house and door held particular literary resonance as a marker of the Jewish feminine. (I will discuss the specifics of the home for the Muslim feminine with the last story of this chapter.) Reinforcing the sense of vulnerability that a broken door might connote, in the Hebrew Bible's "Song of Songs," the door symbolizes the entry to the body of the beloved (e.g. 5:4; 8:9), yet a consensual entry, in contrast to the violating and violent breach through the door in the biblical story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Such a connotation of vulnerability of the breached entry makes it all the more ironic and even humorous that the Jewish men took the door to another town, leaving the women (and children) behind (and Utinfat's family's home door-less). Their behavior belied any real sense of danger; and in fact, Jewish men often left their families—albeit with functioning doors—for extended periods of time in order to engage in trade among the markets; in these circumstances, Muslim men were often the guardians (either paid, or acting out of friendship, or both) of those remaining home (typically the women and children).[29]

Conclusion to the Door Story

In Da Hamid's account, Jewish-Muslim relationships unfolded in patterns of both unions and disunions. Muslims and Jews came together for the celebration of the Jewish wedding and the shared cultural co-production of the *ahwash,* in which Muslim and Jewish women danced to the accompaniment of men drumming. This concord was disrupted by the fight between Jews and Muslims (presumably men only, although not specified in Da Hamid's account) that culminated in Muslims breaking a door to a Jewish home. Then, both groups of men went separately to Taliouine to the seat of the *qa'id* to be judged (although Da Hamid did not mention the Muslim men going to Taliouine, they "appeared" there at the same time as the Jewish men), followed by the temporary physical separation of the Jewish men by their imprisonment. The

[28] The French Captain Bontoux wrote (1951): "If one means by '*mellah*' a Jewish agglomeration well demarcated by walls and containing only Jews within its enclosed space then one can write that there are no *mellahs* in the Precinct of Taliouine." He notes that the only exception is in Ighil n'Ogho, where "the Jews live in a separate quarter... surrounded by walls. But the numerous exits. enabled so much contact between Jews and Muslims, such that one could not speak of Jews living a life apart."

[29] In Chapter Four we "heard" the case described by the Jewish sisters of a Muslim male friend protecting them during their father's absences.

Jewish women subsequently ran out of the village in anticipation of their men's return but instead encountered the victorious Muslim men. While each group of men—Muslim and Jewish—returned home separately, each group returned singing a Berber poem *(tazart)* that was most likely created spontaneously, as was the cultural practice. Unfortunately, Da Hamid did not remember any words of either group's song, but to him it marked both their return home and the restoration of calm, and thus prompted his conclusion that "all was well." His account began and ended with Muslims and Jews participating in shared Berber cultural forms, the *ahwash* and *tazart*.

SHISHEET: REMOVABLE IDENTITY MARKERS AND MOVABLE BOUNDARIES

Abraha's Access to the Qa'id

In "the door story" of the previous section, the narrator, Da Hamid, saw himself as belonging to "the Muslims" who participated ("We had a fight"), although he himself was not an active participant, and found humor in his perception of their manipulation of the case, and of those in authority, to their favor. In the following anecdote, he again expressed amusement at the caprices of power, in this case the circumvention of its boundaries by a Jewish man, Abraha (Judeo-Berber nickname for Abraham) Aznag.[30] Discussing this anecdote allows us to continue the examination of the complex social stratification in the Taliouine region of Morocco's AntiAtlas Mountains, and of the varied relations of Jews to power hierarchies. Here we see that access to power did not necessarily correlate with one's religion—or did it? I had asked Da Hamid again about Jews' relations with the regional authorities at the time, the Glawi clan, who were the powerful Berber warlords who, as mentioned earlier, ruled by proxy for (and were aligned with) the French colonial administration (until Morocco's Independence in 1956). The Glawa were known for their harsh, tyrannical rule over locals.[31] Da Hamid replied with an anecdote:

> Abraha Aznag [a Jew] would go directly in to see the *qa'id,* the son of Glawi. Nobody could stop him. A *khalifa* [qa'id's deputy] asked him, "Why don't you give me your *shisheet* so that I can get in to see the qa'id?"!

[30] Aznag is a last name for both Jews and Muslims, taken from the tribe/region of Zenaga, to the east of Taliouine (Zagmouzen tribal region).

[31] Gavin Maxwell writes in particular of the economic importance of the Taliouine region to the domination of T'hami El-Glawi (he was head of the Glawi clan from 1918-1956), whose home base was further north, and that T'hami identified "himself with the French colonial policy of exploitation":

> As T'hami's status and responsibility to the French grew, so did his need for money. Besides the revenue from the great tribal lands he had assimilated, he received ten per cent on the gross sum of the *tertib,* or agricultural tax... which he levied upon all lands under his command; ...He had cornered the market in all the most important products of southern Morocco [almonds, saffron, dates, mint and olive oil]... Crops from the great olive groves of Taliouine and of the Haouz yielded no less that 300,000,000 francs. (Maxwell 1966:178)

The *shisheet* was the short, conical cap that Jewish men wore as a sign of piety.[32] Throughout the Atlas Mountains, head coverings were the most visible markers of difference between Muslim men, who wore turbans or went bareheaded, and Jewish men.[33] This anecdote plays with the idea of the *shisheet* as an object that can be transferred, transferring identity with it. While the term *shisheet* itself has no religious connotation, it takes on the role of what anthropologist Sherry Ortner calls a "summarizing symbol" for Jewishness in Berber oral traditions. "Summarizing symbols.. .are those symbols which are seen as... representing for the participants in a.. .relatively undifferentiated way, what the system means to them" (Ortner 1973:1340).[34] This perception allowed the Muslim khalifa to reduce Jewish identity to the wearing of the *shisheet.* The anecdote's tone was ambiguous, because the khalifa-while envying Moshe Aznag's position-implied that it was "merely" Aznag's Jewishness that gave him access to power, thus denying him any personal ingenuity or individuality.

At the same time, the khalifa was, of course, joking that he could actually disguise himself as a Jew/Aznag by wearing the *shisheet.* Part of the humor is that the ploy would not actually have worked. Putting on the *shisheet* would neither change the khalifa's identity nor give him the access he sought. Even if all Jews had that special access, which they did not, one does not become Jewish merely by wearing a *shisheet*. The playfulness of the interaction suggests a degree of intimacy between the two men: they appeared to be engaged in a business encounter, yet one in which such joking about religious difference was not off limits.

The narrator's account also suggested an insult to the khalifa, whose effort might appear ridiculous in the recounting. Ironically, the khalifa felt he needed to adopt the marker of a person-a Jew-positioned below him in the social hierarchy in order to gain access to one positioned above him (the *qa'id).* When I asked, Da Hamid suggested practical reasons for Aznag's access: he "knew how to count and oversee the almond harvests; he brought the scale, and weighed, measured, and parceled out the harvest to all the villages."

[32] The *shisheet,* or Berberization of *sheshiya* in North African Arabic dialects, was customarily worn by Jewish men of these regions, who as noted in previous chapters were for the most part strict observers of Judaism. Both Muslim and Jewish men also wear the cap in Tunisia and Algeria, but, at least in Tunisia, it is differentiated by the position on the head: Jews wear it tipped further back on the forehead (Udovitch and Valensi 1984:24, 25; and my personal observations in Jerba, Tunisia, 2002). It is also known as *tarboush* or *fez,* terms that are used in Moroccan cities and coastal towns.

There is no *halakhic* (pertaining to Jewish law) basis for men's head cover other than for prayer (and even about this there is lack of clarity). Wearing it in one's daily life has become a custom for observant Jewish men and boys everywhere, and perhaps is also a choice to differentiate from non-Jews. Jewish men in the Atlas Mountains were also often bearded, as was customary for observant Jewish men everywhere up into the nineteenth century. Whereas Muslim men in the Atlas were usually not bearded.

[33] Muslim men and boys also sometimes wear a *taguiya,* a small knitted cap that sits more snugly on the head (Besancenot suggests that it is of Berber origin, 1990:190).

Jewish and Muslim men both wore the same clothes otherwise, such as the hooded *akhidus.* If the hood was worn-as it was for protection either against the sun or the cold-they then appeared identical, leading to tales of mistaken identity.

[34] While Jews and Muslims were familiar with various aspects of each other's religion, understanding was often only on a symbolic or superficial level. "This category is essentially the category of sacred symbols in the broadest sense ..And it stands for them all at once. It does not encourage reflection on the logical relations among these ideas, nor on the logical consequences of them as they are played out in social actuality, over time and history.. They operate to compound and synthesize a complex system of ideas, to 'summarize' them under a unitary form which, in an old- fashioned way, 'stands for' the system as a whole" (Ortner 1973:1339-40).

The anecdote complicates assumptions of minority-majority relations: here a Jewish man crosses boundaries in the power structure that Muslims, even those highly placed, could not. The issue of Abraha Aznag's special access to the ruler points to the complex and paradoxical position of Jews vis-à-vis the social-political hierarchy. As we have seen in previous chapters, Jews as *dhimmi-s* and under the patronage of Muslim tribes were both protected yet below the Muslim majority in the socio-political hierarchy.[35] Jews also aligned with stronger tribes as a survival strategy, and so some worked for the Glawi clan.[36] This was more a reflection of a survival strategy than political loyalty. Jews did not view their working for Glawi as conflicting with loyalty to the beloved Sultan Mohammed V. (The Glawi clan was used by the French to support their Protectorate and the Sultan Mohammed V was the leader of the nationalist movement). Even in this brief anecdote, we can see the diverse nature of the hierarchies of discrimination (and privilege) in Atlas Mountain communities challenging simplified assumptions of "Muslim domination" over a "Jewish minority."

The role of Jewish men as advisors to Muslim rulers is an aspect of political life that appears in general in Moroccan folktales, and also specifically in Berber tales of both Jewish and Muslim sources, reflecting both historical and contemporary realities. Particularly in Jewish-told tales, the plot often revolves around resentment from a Muslim rival. Interestingly, in many of the Berber Muslim tales, the plot often turns on the wise council of Jewish advisors. Throughout Moroccan history, and despite Jews' minority status—yet perhaps because of their protected and "non-tribal," thus neutral intermediaries—Jewish men played important roles as advisors, or other types of intermediaries, to the various sultans (or local officials).[37] The tradition of the "court Jew" goes well beyond Morocco, and is found throughout the Middle East and Europe, both historically and in folktales.

The question of Muslim resentment towards Jews for such privileged roles and controversial political alignments extends beyond folktales and is a complex one. Possible resentment by Muslims towards Jews for such alignments was likely mitigated by the fact that Muslim and Jewish villagers were interdependent in their efforts to eke out livelihoods in any way possible. In Da Hamid's narration, rather than expressing resentment, it seems he shared the joke *on* the khalifa, siding with the Jewish man's point of view, whom he named as someone he knew, whereas he did not name the khalifa.[38] As noted earlier, Da Hamid occupied the lower echelons of the power hierarchy, both past and present, as a poor, landless man, and, thus aligned himself with the fate of the "underdog"—the Jewish man in this case—having the upper hand in the joke.

[35] As explained in previous chapters: *dhimmi* refers to the status that granted non-Muslim monotheists protection under Islamic rule in exchange for a poll tax and certain markers of a subservient status — which varied greatly geographically and chronologically in their enforcement.

[36] On the connection of Jews to powerful potentates, and to the Glawi in particular, Schroeter writes: "Perhaps the most significant example was the relationship to the dominant family in southern Morocco: Madani al-Glawi and his brother Thami al-Glawi ... Significantly in the five *casbahs* that Glawi constructed for his deputies in the south, there were either mellahs or significant Jewish population in the area closely under his control. Jews also became closely linked to Glawi and his agents" (Schroeter 2011:148-49).

[37] André Azoulay, who is Jewish, had an influential role as financial advisor to the late King Hassan II, and continues to advise Muhammad VI. See also Schroeter's *The Sultan's Jew* (2002).

[38] Indeed he knew Aznag: "Abraha had a big belly! He was in charge of the almond harvests and supervised the sorting of grains."

As Mary Douglas writes on jokes and their usefulness in understanding humor as it relates to power hierarchy,

> whatever the joke, however remote its subject, the telling of it is potentially subversive. Since its form consists of a victorious tilting of uncontrol against control, it is an image of leveling of hierarchy, the triumph of intimacy over formality, of unofficial values over official ones. (Douglas 1968:366)

However, the joke about Da Hamid and the Khalifa was also acceptable and funny to narrator and audience because the change was only temporary. While subversive, it ultimately did not actually threaten the status quo.[39] Yet, that does not mean it had no lasting effect either: "something pertinent has been said about the social structure" (Douglas 1968:368).

> If [the joke] devalues social structure, perhaps it celebrates something else instead. It could be saying something about the value of individuals as against the value of the social relations in which they are organised. Or it could be saying something about different levels of social structure; the irrelevance of one obvious level and the relevance of a submerged and unappreciated one. (Douglas 1968:370)

Thus, the joke reaffirmed a sense of community among those of the less privileged levels in contrast to the power structure—to which both Muslims and Jews had inconsistent access, as we have seen. Insulting the one in power, in this case the khalifa was something that both Muslim and Jew probably would have enjoyed together. For Da Hamid as the amused storyteller, there was humor in the fact of the underdog (Aznag, being a Jew) attaining power, which Da Hamid would have appreciated (or even identified with) as a member of the lower echelons of the social stratification. And, as we saw in "The Door Story," there are ways in which Da Hamid might have even have felt he belonged in a lower echelon than did certain Jews.

Removable Identity Marker?

The *shisheet* understood in collective Berber Muslim memory as a "summarizing symbol" of Jewishness also appeared in fragments of sung poetry duels remembered throughout Tashelhit-speaking regions from the High Atlas to the Anti-Atlas Mountains.[40] In these duels,

[39] Douglas also highlights this temporary aspect: "A joke... represents a temporary suspension of the social structure, or rather it makes a little disturbance in which the particular structuring of society becomes less relevant than another. But the strength of its attack is entirely restricted by the consensus on which it depends for recognition" (Douglas 1968:372).

[40] The significance of the widespread geographic appearance of this genre of *shisheet* anecdotes and use in duels is perhaps suggested by what anthropologists Charles Briggs and Richard Bauman write in their article on "Genre, Intertextuality, and Social Power": "Genres also bear social, ideological, and political-economic connections.. Invoking a genre thus creates indexical connections that extend far beyond the present setting of production or reception, thereby linking a particular act to other times, places, and persons.. generic features thus foreground the status of utterances as recontextualizations of prior discourse." (Briggs and Bauman 1992:147-48)

Jewish poets used the *shisheet* in this way, as opposed to the Muslim khalifa in the previous example, again, as recounted by Muslims in the examples I recorded.

Kelthuma, an elderly Muslim woman of the High Atlas Mountain village of Sor, recounted the following poetic excerpt as we sat outside amidst a small, multi-generational group of women, adjacent to the square where villagers performed the *ahwash* (the traditional communal dance). [41] Just as the Muslim khalifa in the previous anecdote reduced Jewish identity to the wearing of the *shisheet*, so did the Jewish poet himself in the following exchange, which took place at the occasion of an *ahwash*. In this example, it was not the donning of the *shisheet* that granted access, but rather its removal:

A Muslim poet sang:
"We share this gathering with Jews,
We ask God for forgiveness."
A Jewish poet responded:
"The *shisheet* is the only difference [between us].
It's easy to take it off."

The Jewish poet's response may seem an uncomfortable solution, in which he had to give up his Jewish identity marker in order to participate in the *ahwash*, one of the highlights of the communal village social life. Yet, Jewish men, did not in fact, give up their head coverings. Moreover, Kelthuma, speaking through the Jewish poet, drew attention to the shared humanity between Jew and Muslim, asserting that differences between them were alienable. We saw this concept worded differently in another duel excerpt in Chapter Three, in which a Jewish man responded to a Muslim's declaration of separateness:

People are the same, only the evil heart splits them away Fingers in the
right hand are equally the same God has made different religions;
We want to share happy occasions.

The meaning of the Muslim poet's couplet in the Sor women's example, "We share this gathering with Jews, We ask God for forgiveness," was ambiguous, particularly when considered in the context of other instances of requesting divine forgiveness that occurred in several of the Muslim-remembered fragments of Jewish-Muslim poetry duels. Were the Muslims asking for forgiveness because they were sharing the occasion with Jews?[42] In many of the recollections I recorded, the apology was also linked to the idea (either by actual lines in the poetic contest or explanations provided by the informants remembering them) that the villagers—often both

[41] In this impromptu gathering of five women, only Kelthuma was old enough to remember having lived with Jews. Her daughter was among the younger women. The daughter as well as the others were familiar with her mother's stories and joined in singing the songs.

[42] Lakhsassi reported another example in which that meaning is explicit: "In Duggana [in the High Atlas, near El Kelaa des Sraghna] for example, they told us that during one of these sessions a female Muslim poet asks for divine forgiveness for celebrating in mixed company between members of both communities, to which the male Jewish poet retorts that the Muslim woman can rest assured on this matter given that God has created for each community its own religion!" (Lakhsassi 2008, my translation)

Muslim and Jewish—asked to be pardoned for having been too enraptured in the *ahwash* to stop to pray.[43] For example, after singing the above lines, one of the women informants explained that "if there's the first call to the prayer, then the second call and nobody gets up to pray, that's it." This recurring narrative pattern was part of the inventory of the repertoire. For example, in the town of Amizmiz, an elder Muslim told me:

> When the Muslims go to sing with Jews in the *ahwash,* they sing:
> "May God pardon us"
> The *hazan* [rabbi] sings [in response]:
> "The ahwash makes us forget everything We also
> forgot to pray/we are all one/the same."[44]

And I recorded another excerpt in Tifnout in which a Muslim sang:

> O you who are here gathering,
> Be my witness that we are all one/the same.
> It is time for praying and neither of us prayed,
> Are we not all the same/one?

However, in Kelthuma's example, and despite her explanation, the Jewish poet's response, "The shisheet is the only difference between us. It's easy to take it off," implied that the Muslims' request was for divine forgiveness for sharing the gathering with Jews. Such expressions of ambivalence by Muslims about sharing the *ahwash* with Jews reflected the ongoing tensions and negotiations between separation and affiliation.[45] While on the one hand the Muslim poet expressed a certain reluctance to share the occasion with Jews, the Muslim narrator—by voicing the Jewish poet's response—expressed the desire to participate, and perhaps even to "belong." Whereas this attitude by Jews was emphasized in Muslim-told anecdotes or poetic contests, I never heard such desire expressed by Jews themselves. In Jewish reminiscences there was a sense neither of being excluded nor of wanting to participate more than they did. Perhaps underlying Muslim projection of Jews' desire to participate was a generalized expectation by Muslims for Jews to convert to Islam (and thereby recognize the superiority of Judaism). The reverse was not true: despite Jews also feeling their religion to be the superior one, Judaism does not actively seek converts.

[43] Observant Jewish men pray three times daily, observant Muslims, five times.

[44] The Berber word, "*yan*," literally means "one," but in these duels it also has the sense of "the same."

[45] As, for example, in an exchange we saw in Chapter Three:

> The Jews wanted to do the *ahwash* with the Muslims.
> The Muslims sang to them:
> "Separate your *ahwash* from ours."
> A Jew sang back to them:
> "As for religion, God has already separated us,
> But for happy occasions we can be together."

The reminiscences of the previous duels (and the one that follows) also highlighted a contrast between the two genres of discourse: prayer and poetry duels. While both were equally part of Atlas Jews' and Muslims' lives, daily prayers were of course performed separately and differently by each religious group (and in Hebrew and Arabic respectively), whereas the poetry duels were performed together, in similar fashion, and in Berber. Thus, Muslim and Jewish attendees of the *ahwash* enacted the actual words of the duels, "God has made different religions; we want to share happy occasions." In the narratives of these examples, the pull of sharing in the *ahwash* was stronger that the pull of separation to their respective and separate speech acts.

Intertextuality and Ambivalence in Assertions of Commonality and Difference

In one more example of the use of *shisheet* in poetic contests, the remembered exchange reversed the order of a poetic provocation that was followed by poetic reconciliation, shown in the previous examples; in this example, the male Jewish poet began with an expression of affiliation and the male Muslim poet responded with an insult as a challenge (of course, the exchange likely continued beyond the content that the informant recited).[46]

To introduce the exchange, the interlocutor—a Muslim man in his eighties from the AntiAtlas village of Tahala—described the *ahwash* during which it had been performed. He did not recall what the occasion was, but remembered that everybody participated—Jews and Muslims alike—and that it began right after lunch and continued until late, without either group stopping for their respective prayers (as was the case with the narrative topos described above):

> Nothing could interrupt the dancing. Except, the poetry duels.
> Spontaneously, a poet would start speaking and the dancing would stop.
> A Jewish poet initiated the following poem:
> "Witness, O you people who are here present
> that we are all one/the same,
> Only the *shisheet*, which in fact is a very small thing,
> separates us."
> A Muslim poet responded:
> "Witness, O you people who are here present,
> You and the dogs are one."

In this exchange we can observe "two kinds of intertextuality—performance-internal and cross-performance" (Feld 1990:251). These two types of intertextuality overlap in their effects, as we shall see shortly. The Muslim poet employed the Jewish poet's words to play on the fact that the Jewish poet had not specified with whom he was "all one." Parody is a mode of intertextuality, as Richard Bauman writes that "involves the ludic...transformation of a prior text" (Bauman 2004:5). As seen in the previous chapter, humor mixed with hostility, and the insult was acceptable, thanks to the format of the poetic contest. Anthropologist Donald Brenneis' general description of the verbal duels he surveyed throughout the world fits these Berber contests:

[46] This is the same Muslim interlocutor who recited the duel in Chapter Four in which the Jewish tool sharpener gets the final word, illustrating that it is the witty response that is prized, no matter who makes it. As seen earlier, this ongoing game of one-upmanship is characteristic of Berber oral traditions in general.

> A duel.. .is not a free-for-all with no holds barred, but a rule-governed event. The standards for style, content and context characteristic of duels in each society force duelists to shape their performances in accordance with the aesthetic expectations of their listeners. These constraints also assure the audience of the traditional, predictable, and hence, safe nature of the contest. Duels are only possible because they are, despite their often outrageous content, conventional performances; adherence to generic rules shields both performers and audience from the dangers usually linked with such topics. (Brenneis 1980:171)

The Jewish poet's assertion that "we are all the one" indexed other such exchanges between Jews and Muslims as well as Berber poetry duels more generally in a "crossperformance" intertextuality. One of the functions of an *ahwash* was to assert unity (as noted in Chapter Three), and refrains of commonality were characteristic of the sung poetry at these often intertribal or inter-village occasions in the High and Anti-Atlas Mountains (that is, the regions in which the Tashelhit dialect of Berber is/was spoken). Conflict over scarce resources (such as water and grazing rights) was rife, yet these same harsh and precarious climatic and geographic conditions made interdependence between communities all the more crucial. Ethnomusicologist Philip Schuyler asserted that the reason song texts accompanying an *ahwash* "often glorify communal unity" is that "in a subsistence economy, cooperation between neighbouring families and villages is necessary" (Schuyler 1979:72). As we have seen, such reasoning applied to Jewish-Muslim interdependence as well.

However, Schuyler did not mention the irony and ambivalence about the interdependence, as highlighted in the above exchange and remarked upon by anthropologist Katherine Hoffman (Hoffman 2002:532,538). Much of what Hoffman writes of another genre of Berber poems *(tizrrarin)* that also accompany public celebrations, such as weddings that might "unite" two tribes, also applied to the poetry duels performed by Jews and Muslims. In particular, she notes that "a concern with maintaining security through interdependence between social groups and villages tends to be articulated explicitly" (Hoffman 2002:517), as in this example that she cites:

> We are one, me and you [plural],
> we share walls
> our fields share boundaries and
> springs as one they are irrigated
> from our channels we water yours.

The opening line, "We are one, me and you," is similar to the line, "We are all one," that we have seen in the Jewish-Muslim duels. Hoffman observes that this unity is not without qualifications: "For Anti-Atlas women, being 'one' means sharing the very stuff of life-land and water. But it also means sharing boundaries. 'We are one' not because we are friends, or because we are from the same lineage, village, or tribe, but because our plots 'share walls'" (Hoffman 2002:519). That is, acknowledgment of clear boundaries goes hand-in-hand with the interdependence. Regarding the *tizrrarin,* she added:

> They powerfully suggest commonality where there may appear to be little.... Given the potential for strife in public gatherings, tizrrarin verses serve the crucial function of declaring bonds between people. (Hoffman 2002:517)

And so, the negotiation between affiliation and separation that permeated Jewish-Muslim relations, and the oral traditions about them, was more generally present in the larger Tashelhit-speaking Berber cultural environment. Jewish and Muslim poets intertextually refashioned prevalent, already constituted cultural forms for negotiating affiliation and difference, and to reflect their interreligious relationships by adding specific characteristics such as the summarizing symbol of the *shisheet.*

Dueling poets' use of intertextuality—both in-performance and cross-performance—had several overlapping effects: engaging the audience, depersonalizing insults by indexing familiar expressions and known topoi and by lending the poet authority. The audience, Jewish or Muslim or both, was likely aware of and appreciative of the intertextual play in the duels. As Bauman and Briggs write, "a crucial part of the process of constructing intertextual relations may be undertaken by the audience" (1992:157). In his book *A World of Others' Words* Bauman adds: "Thus, participants bring with them to these events a set of conventional understandings and expectations" (Bauman 2004:130-31). In this way, the poet diminishes the distance between "author" and audience by introducing familiar poetic patterns and expressions. "The webs of intertextual resonance.extend across time and space, linking discursive moments separated by a single speaker.. .or many decades, a few feet of interpersonal space or hundreds of miles" (Bauman 2004:128).

The poet's use of intertextuality transfers the exchange between individual poets to a general plane. It is no longer a uniquely personal duel. The audience's recognition that others have uttered these words before bridges the personal and the collective. "What makes the insults less insulting, then, would be.. .also the general knowledge that the insults are part of a memorized repertoire and not composed to insult the particular opponent" (Pagliai 2009:78). In this sense, the intertextuality "normalizes" the intercommunal tensions by recasting them in already constituted "textual" traditions of Berber cultural practices. In this way the form, as well as the content, reflects the interplay between sameness and difference.

Intertextuality also allows the poets to assume authority, as seen in Chapter Three. The "battle" in the sung duel can be seen as one over authority. Y et this battle also serves to entertain. The "exchange" of authority between the poets adds tension and suspense to the performance, as the power relations can be inverted with a single line, that is, until the next occasion for verbal sparring.

Due to the ongoing exchange of poetic authority in which Muslims who are reminiscing do not hesitate to give Jewish poets authority or to take it away, I argue that the poetic duel as a genre allowed for a shared authority and shared agency between Muslims and Jews, and that the corpus represents what might be called co-productions. Ethnomusicologist Steven Feld's writing on the laments of the Kaluli people of Papua New Guinea aptly describes this process: "Intertextuality as a discourse relationship is also the key to the social relationships shared by its producers, and to the emergent understandings and feelings evoked for their audience. It is the cumulatively 'layered' and interactive dynamic of the jointly produced text" (Feld 1990: 247).

BOUNDARIES CIRCUMVENTED AND SUBVERTED

The two examples in this final section tease out the sometimes fine line between respecting another's religion and not betraying one's own. These anecdotes all involved the use of words by members of the religious minority—Jews—to circumvent or even subvert what might have been construed as expectations to respect the majority group's religion—that is, Islam. In fact, in these anecdotes Jews went beyond merely avoiding blatant disrespect to engaging in subtle acts of subversion that might also be couching indirect insults. This is not surprising given that the stories often played on those in the weaker position using words to assert power because other means were limited. Such strategies, however, were not lost on their Muslim neighbors, who recounted the anecdotes to me with amusement and even appreciation, while also suggesting they were viewed with humor by both groups at the time they were performed.

Circumvention or Subversion #1: "Hai, hai, hai, hai and the holy men"

The following example involves another poetry duel. The Muslim interlocutor told me that in his town, Amizmiz, only a few select Jewish poets—those who knew how "to do it right"—could participate in the poetry duels performed during the Muslims' *ahwash.* He recounted how these occasions often began:

> The Muslim poets would sing:
> "Sidi Nabi [Arabic, my honored Prophet] and the holy men/saints"
> And the Jewish poets would respond, to the same rhythm:
> "Hai, hai, hai, hai and the holy men/saints."

The narrator sang the couplet several times, laughing each time, and finding it to be a very clever solution to what might otherwise have been a problem at this shared occasion. He took care to explain to me (knowing that I am Jewish), that Jews were not allowed to mention the Prophet (Muhammad). Jewish law does not actually prohibit this (in fact it would be anachronistic). Yet, it is important to note the power of utterances in both religions. The first pillar of Islam is the *shahada* ("testimony," Arabic), the testimony of faith for Muslims. All it takes to convert to Islam is the pronunciation of the *shahada,* which is comprised of phrases testifying that there is no other god than God and that Muhammad is his messenger.[47] Similarly, Judaism's core belief is expressed in the *sh'ma* ("hear," Hebrew), which testifies to the oneness of God.[48] The acknowledgment of Muhammad as the Messenger or Prophet (with capital 'P') of God is therefore the crucial difference between the *shahada* and the *sh'ma,* these most fundamental expressions of belief of Islam and Judaism, respectively, and both of which are recited several times daily by observant followers. Jews might thus have perceived singing praise to the Prophet (Muhammad) as a transgression.

By recontextualizing the vernacular filler vocables, *hai hai hai hai,* into the form presented by the Muslim poets, the Jewish poets sidestepped the formal religious greeting, and could even be seen as subverting it. The syllables, *hai hai hai* (typically uttered in threes), are not

[47] "I bear witness that there is no god except God; And I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of God."

[48] "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." From the Hebrew Bible, Deuteronomy 6:4. "Israel" here does not refer to the present nation-state, but the Jewish people.

necessarily empty fillers when used in conversation. They might express (in both Moroccan Arabic and Berber) astonishment at the occurrence of something unpleasant, or suggest that what has been said is an exaggeration or even a lie. According to the narrator's telling, the subversion was accepted at the time: "This way everyone was satisfied. It was not really a ruse." The performance by the Jewish singers might also have been an expression of respect, as if saying, "We are not Muslim, but this is how we can participate," thus bridging the gap between social and religious expectations.

Circumvention or Subversion #2: "We're just coming to see *Lalla* R'qiya"

Da Boualem, whom we met in Chapter Four, recounted the following anecdote:

> DA BOUALEM: Once the village chief went on the *Hajj* [Arabic, pilgrimage] to Mecca. When he returned, the Muslim villagers all went to his house to pay him a visit [i.e. to congratulate him]. The Jews were embarrassed; they really should go also [i.e. it would be conspicuous if they did not go]. So, they decided to pay a visit. They took sugar cones and gifts. But the Jews, instead of paying him a visit, instead, they started to sing *[Da Boualem sang]:*
>
> "We're just coming to see *Lalla* R'qiya whose hands are beautified by henna designs."
>
> They went to visit his wife, not him *[Da Boualem explained and laughed heartily].* That means they don't care about Mecca, or the *Hajj.*
>
> SARAH: But they *had* to go pay a visit?
>
> DA BOUALEM: Yes, that's the tradition.

This story teases out the sometimes-fine line that existed for Jews and Muslims between respecting one another's religion and religious practices, and not betraying their own. On the one hand—as suggested by Da Boualem—the obligation of Jews to visit the chief might have felt to them as if it meant paying tribute to the *Hajj* itself, that is, one of the five pillars of Islam. Paying tribute to someone who has gone on the *Hajj* is not proscribed by Jewish law, nor antithetical to one's Jewishness; however, it was likely perceived as such by the minority population, at least according to the Muslim narrator's telling. On the other hand, it was a social expectation of villagers to celebrate one another's momentous occasions, whether religious or other. By disconnecting the visit from religion, the Jewish villagers found a solution that was seemingly satisfactory to all parties.

"Tradition" here suggests the permeable sometimes indistinguishable boundary between religion and culture. Y et, religion and culture bleed into one another in inseparable ways, particularly in a shared culture, components of which have been drawn from Islam and Judaism, as well as Berber culture and religious practices. Centuries of intercultural exchange have blurred these boundaries. Yet, boundaries do remain, such as those drawn by the Jews in the story.

Again, as in the earlier anecdote, ambiguity contributed to the humor. Were the Jews really going to see the village chief, and only jokingly singing about Lalla R'qiya as a way of

announcing that the visit was not religious? This ambiguity allowed the action to be read either way.

Y et, given the patriarchal society, there was also an insult to the chief layered into the Jews' action. They "feminized" their visit by paying respect to the woman of the household rather than to the man, which could be taken as an affront to him. However, the act also feminized the Jewish men in the party, alluding to the desexualized position of Jewish men among Muslims as desexualized. This also points to a different type of access Jewishness allowed men:[49] as tailors or peddlers of household goods, Jewish men were allowed into a Muslim woman's home when no other men of her family were present, which was unthinkable for a Muslim man outside the family.

One way of interpreting this anecdote is that Jews engaged in a strategy of circumvention that went beyond merely avoiding a show of disrespect and that might be perceived as subversion, barely hiding their lack of deference. Conversely, might the circumvention actually be a form of respect for their Muslim neighbors? Or could it have been both, per Bakhtin?

CONCLUSION

Religious boundaries are not always what they seem; it is often in blurring, challenging, circumventing, or even subverting them that creativity happens. The foregoing anecdotes illuminate the ability of Atlas Muslim and Jewish villagers to engage with religious difference creatively and with humor, particularly when such differences are "performed" in culturally acceptable ways that also preserve the religious integrity of each group, as well as the cultural integrity of the village community as a whole. [* 106]

[49] See, for example, Rosen *Bargaining* 159-60; Harvey Goldberg *Jewish Life in Muslim Libya:* 68-81.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion: The Saffron Path

"Narrative is the material of tradition and cultural practice,
while narration is its perpetuation."
— Deborah Kapchan, *Gender on the Marketplace*

In February 2012, I took my first trip to the town of Taliouine, in the valley of saffron surrounded by the barren Anti-Atlas Mountains, but with the greener, still snow-topped High Atlas Mountains in view to the north. The almond trees were in blossom and spring was in the air; hints of warmth were comforting after a very cold winter. I stayed in a newish, modest hotel whose rooms were painted in warm saffron shades. Almost everything on the menu was flavored with saffron, including a delicious saffron-scented tea. I had been frustrated with my first interview and initial contacts in Taliouine and was contemplating leaving, thinking maybe I already had enough material for my dissertation from the time I had spent in Tifnout (and throughout Israel). I was nearing the end of a long, uninterrupted period of fieldwork, and frankly, beginning to tire of sitting and waiting.[274] But instead, I sat and waited—and listened. And, as you have just read, my fieldwork from Taliouine informs much of this dissertation.

Among the anecdotes I recorded in Taliouine is one I call *"T'halallit,"* which is the Berber feminine form of the Arabic word *halal*, ritually acceptable. In Morocco, elder Berber Muslims used it when relating to me their memories of Jewish rituals. For example, one told of a Jewish woman going for her ritual bath, the *mikvah*, after which she would be "t'halallit." Another person told how when the Jewish ritual butcher would slaughter an animal, the Jewish women would stand all in a line, and if the animal was pronounced *tharam* (unpermitted; Berber masculine form of the Arabic term *haram)*, they'd kick their right legs up to the left - signaling its unfitness. If he pronounced it *thalal* (the Berber form of *halal*, masculine), they'd swing their left legs to the right.

One elder Muslim man, Da Boualem, told several stories about the rabbi of his village. This rabbi was beloved by both Jews and Muslims and known for his wisdom and kindness.

[274] *"Ggawr u s'bar,"* or "sitting and patience/waiting" (in Berber and Arabic, respectively), is what the ethnographer filmmaker Ivan Boccara told me he'd answer to people who asked how he made his films. I find it a fitting description for my own process of fieldwork.

> A young Jewish woman went to the fields. She was beautiful. She and a Muslim man had sexual relations beneath a fig tree. Some Jews saw them. The man got away, but the Jews took the young woman to the rabbi. He asked her, "What happened? Tell me the truth." She said "Mr. B. was above in the fig tree, and I was down below; each of us was looking after our own interests." And the rabbi said to her, "My daughter, tell me the truth. Did Mr. B. penetrate you all the way? If so, that's fine, you're *t'halalit* [here meaning "it was permissible; your purity is intact"], but if he only went in a little bit, *t'haramit* [here meaning "it was not permissible; you're defiled"].
> So the young woman said to him, "I will tell you the truth. He went all the way."
>
> The rabbi said, "So, now you're *t'haramit."* All the Jews started crying out, begging the rabbi to pardon her: "We're not going to make our sister leave, we're not going to abandon our sister because of Mr. B." The rabbi couldn't stand their screaming, it was the entire community. So he said, "Ok, ok, enough! Then, *t'halalit*." He pardoned her [cleared her name]. "Enough already, she's *t'halalit*."

In telling this anecdote, Da Boualem clearly understood the rabbi's deception to manipulate the young woman into telling the truth and admired the rabbi's strategy, which he viewed as justified. She was forgiven, and Da Boualem told me she eventually married a Jewish man.

Da Boualem's anecdote has echoes of the beginning of the famed *1001 Nights,* in which a slave descends from a tree to make love to the queen, an act that when observed by the king, sets him on his mad rampage to marry and kill a woman each day, until his vizier's daughter Scheherazade captivates him with her nightly stories, eventually healing him. Of course, there are many more such connections, but pursuing them is for a future project.

The story reflects both Muslims' and Jews' preoccupation with religious boundaries (and purity), and yet could also be argued to reflect the attraction of these boundaries, and the creative potential engaging with them offers—in this case, storytelling. The anecdote might also highlight the fragility of such boundaries in view of actual human relations. Once again we see the ambivalence of the relationship between Muslims and Jews: that the two communities were enmeshed and intertwined, yet separate at the same time. Once again words have power over actions, as displayed by the cacophony of the Jewish community (through the telling of a Muslim) that sways the rabbi's verdict. The anecdote of the wise rabbi, as told by a Muslim, suggests the idea that flexibility, rather than rigidity, is key for survival, particularly for the Jewish religious minority in this story. One of the worst of the collective fears of the Jewish community was intermarriage, because it almost inevitably meant the Jew (and usually the wife) becoming part of the Muslim community (if not actually converting), rather than the other way around, and therefore threatened the survival of the minority. The flexibility towards boundaries depicted in this anecdote—that one can transgress them, yet return—contrasts with the trends of polarization in today's world. Prevailing narratives too often have an all-or-nothing, black-or- white approach, overshadowing more nuanced perspectives. It is these nuanced perspectives that I have tried to tease out throughout this dissertation.

This study has highlighted the benefits of studying relationships between groups that are different, whether religiously, culturally, ethnically, etc.) through the voices of individuals. By illuminating the ongoing and delicate dance at the boundaries of difference for Atlas Mountain Jews and Muslims, this study has argued for the recognition of the creative and cultural enrichment for each group when there is not a denial of difference, but rather an engagement with it. My objective has not been to offer single interpretations, but rather to highlight ambiguities and nuances as much as possible, in order to give space to the multivocality of my interlocutors' words rather than imposing closed readings on them. Throughout, my intent has been to provide context for investigating Muslim-Jewish relations in Morocco's Atlas Mountains in ways that can be applied more generally to Morocco as well as throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

When I conceived this project, I feared it was probably too late to get firsthand memories of Jewish-Muslim coexistence in Morocco's Atlas Mountains. I had begun researching in Morocco in the mid-1990s as an independent scholar, late enough that many potential interlocutors were dying, taking their stories with them. When I followed up in Israel beginning in 1999, many people would tell me, "Oh, you should have been here five years ago, before so- and-so died! He/she would have been able to tell you so much." In my dissertation prospectus I wrote: "In less than ten years it will no longer be possible to interview Muslim and Jewish villagers with firsthand experience of the intercommunal life, lending this project both urgency and poignancy."

I seem to keep adding "ten years" as the years pass. It appears that there is much more research that could be done in the coming decade. I see this project as a call to acknowledge the value of localizing studies, and as a challenge to generalized assumptions and limited understandings. Although Berber cultural traditions have their own uniqueness, I do believe other unique stories are waiting to be heard wherever people are ready to sit and listen. It is impossible to do justice to the complexity of such a long and variegated coexistence, but if I have raised as many questions as I have answered, I will consider this dissertation a success, as just one piece in a larger, ongoing conversation. While I have not carried out in-depth studies elsewhere, I have spoken informally to Muslims and Jews from Iraq, Syria, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Palestine, Lebanon, all of whom have stories to share of nuanced interpersonal relationships, suggesting there is much more to be discovered about the vast diversity of their experiences, too often obscured by broad generalizations.

Theory can inform, but the essence of research is listening. The rewards are enormous, as we have much to learn from these less heard voices. Muslims and Jews of the Atlas Mountains negotiated difference with poetry, humor, and irony, a process instructive in viewing difference as a source of creativity, learning, entertainment, and even celebration.

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